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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
With the rising cost
of food, fuel, and
utilities, are you still
able to set aside a
portion of your
paycheck for
savings?

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INSIDE



Resignation

HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson announced his resignation amid the wreckage of the national housing crisis.

BUSINESS...Page 14

Torch Arrives

The elaborate ceremony to rekindle the Olympic torch went off without a hitch in closely guarded Tiranmen Square.

ASIA...Page 16



Hard Rock

Hard Rock Café hosted a special cocktail event yesterday evening to introduce to the Saipan community its new regional director of operations.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

FAA says airports in the region are safe. **PAGE 2**
Rising waters threaten Micronesian islands. **PAGE 3**

Child sex abuse on the rise

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
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REPORTER

The Division of Youth Services has reported 572 child abuse cases throughout the CNMI last fiscal year, the highest of which is child sexual abuse, with a reported 156 cases from October 2006 to September 2007.

Forum takes up status for long-term alien workers

The issue of granting resident status to long-term nonresident workers in the CNMI will be the subject of a forum that will be held tonight at the Monte Carlo, a bar located across Hopwood Junior High School, starting at 6:30pm.

The forum, called "Long-Term Resident Status: Issues and Possibilities for Change Under CNMI Law," will feature

four speakers who will discuss the issue with the audience.

Members of the Unity Movement organizers core group—Malou Barueco; Bonnie Sagana of the Dekada Movement; Conrad Ocampo; and Ernest Maicle of MOVER—said that tonight's forum is open to the public.

"All interested foreign national work-

The 156 reported cases is a sharp spike compared to the 44 cases reported in 2000.

According to Child Protection Services supervisor Laura Ogomuro, the CNMI is seeing a rising trend in the area of child sexual abuse.

In past fiscal years, the total number of sexual abuse cases "is not even half of the 156 reported in fiscal year 2007."

See CHILD on Page 4

ers, local workers and business people, representatives of the business community, local citizen action group members, and members of the general public, of all races and nationalities, are welcome to attend and participate in the discussion," the group said.

The speakers are:

See FORUM on Page 4

'2nd wage hike will jack up payrolls'

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The second round of minimum wage hikes in the CNMI in May will result in a double-digit percentage increase in payrolls, according to Saipan Chamber of Commerce president James T. Arenovski.

The president of Delta Manage-

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Arenovski



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BUDDY WALK

Participants and representatives from the CNMI Council on Developmental Disabilities, CNMI Association of Families with Disabilities, CHC Volunteers Association, First Lady's Vision Foundation, CNMI Cancer Association, NMC Nursing Students, and other participants gather for a photo during the successful 3rd annual Buddy Walk at the Garapan Fishing Base Saturday morning.

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Local

FAA says airports in the region are safe

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Federal Aviation Administration program manager for the Micronesia gave a thumbs-up to international airports in the region, saying that they are safe and meet U.S. standards.

In an interview during a lull

in yesterday's 2008 Pacific Aviation Directors Workshop at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Barry Brayer said FAA would have not allowed U.S. carriers to fly to international airports in the western Pacific if the facilities are inadequate and don't meet the agency's minimum safety standards.

"All the [international] airports are safe and any operations that are done, any flights that are operated in or out of the airports are done within regulations and to the highest standards," said Brayer.

He added that aside from U.S. standards, FAA also checks international airports whether they meet international standards.

"The airports that we work with are international airports and they have to meet certain minimum international standards. There are also FAA standards that we are working with them to meet and it is in our regulations, which are

very similar to the international regulations," he said.

On the state of the CNMI's airports, Brayer was happy to report that the airstrips on Saipan, Rota, and Tinian are in good shape.

"Of course, the airports in the Commonwealth have to meet the U.S. standards. We have a program for inspection of airports and we also teach throughout Micronesia how to do those inspections," he said.

The second day of the three-day conference dealt mostly with FAA reports and regulations, including an interesting overview

of medical policies of the agency presented by FAA flight surgeon Dr. Stephen Roberts.

There were also presentations made by airport managers about the work they are currently conducting in their areas of responsibilities.

Brayer said the military expansion in Guam and how it interrelates with the aviation and airports in the region would be discussed today.

The 2008 Pacific Aviation Directors Workshop is the third time the event has been held in the capital of the CNMI after

2001 and 2004.

"What we try to do is rotate it around different places. For instance, last year we were in Koror, Palau, in 2006 we were in Guam, in 2005 in Hawaii," said Brayer.

He added, "We rotate around to places that can accommodate it. It's an opportunity for both the government organizations, the airport operators, all the stakeholders, the airlines are all here, to get together and talk about issues and concerns so that we're all networking and all on the same page in terms of aviation safety."

Whatever happened to 'green energy' law

By AGNES E. DONATO
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REPORTER

Saipan lawmakers are pushing to get a report from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. regarding CUC's progress in implementing the renewable energy requirements set by recent law.

The Public Utilities, Transportation and Communications Committee of the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation wants to know the status of the net energy metering requirements that CUC is mandated to implement under Public Law 15-23.

The committee has also sought an update on CUC's efforts to meet the renewable energy portfolio goal of 10 percent by Dec. 31, 2008, as required by Public Law 15-87.

Furthermore, CUC was asked to report on the extent to which the utility has undertaken any planning "to improve energy efficiency, affordability and reliability" in the CNMI.

Rep. Tina Sablan, chairwoman of the SNILD-PUTC Committee, said the information request is part of the panel's effort to develop a

long-term energy plan for Saipan and the Northern Islands.

She also invited CUC to appoint a representative to attend the committee's regular energy planning meetings. The next meeting will take place today, 3:30pm, in the House Speaker's conference room.

Public Law 15-23 established requirements for the use of renewable energy, a policy for energy efficiency, and standards for clean energy transportation. It set deadlines for each electric utility to gradually increase the amount of alternative energy they produce.

Public Law 15-87 amended the initial green energy law, setting more rigid requirements for local utilities to integrate green energy into their system. P.L. 15-87 requires that renewable energy constitute 80 percent of the power utility's net sales seven years from now.

Under the latest law, green energy must constitute at least 10 percent of the total energy produced by CUC by the end of 2008. From then on, the standard would double every two years, until it reaches 80 percent in 2014.



2008 YOUNG ARTISTS SHOWCASE

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela joins first place winner Marianas High School's Joseph Martin, right, with his artwork titled "The Beauty of Where I am From," during the announcement of winners at the Mayor's Office in San Antonio yesterday. Martin's artwork bested 31 other entries from Saipan International School, MHS, Saipan Southern High, Chacha Oceanview Jr. High, Hopwood Junior High and Mt. Carmel School. His artwork will represent the CNMI in the Maui County Sister Cities Foundation 2008 Young Artists Showcase. Also in photo are second placer Bryan Deleon Guerrero, third placer Earllon Granada, and MHS art teacher Wesley Foster holding the artwork of honorable mention Alexandra Aidan Maminta.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

SHIPPING SCHEDULE



Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD Kelang	ETD Fuzhou	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung
STADT HAMBURG	014W	3/22 SAT	3/20 THU	3/10 MON	3/27 THU	3/11 TUE	3/15 SAT	3/28 FRI	3/24 MON	3/23 SUN	3/18 TUE	3/9 SUN	3/24 MON	3/28 FRI	3/29 SAT
MELL SENOKO	002W	3/29 SAT	3/27 THU	3/17 MON	4/3 THU	3/18 TUE	3/22 SAT	4/4 FRI	3/31 MON	3/30 SUN	3/25 TUE	3/16 SUN	3/31 MON	4/4 FRI	4/5 SAT
ASIAN ISLAND	007W	4/5 SAT	4/3 THU	3/24 MON	4/10 THU	3/25 TUE	3/29 SAT	4/11 FRI	4/7 MON	4/6 SUN	4/1 TUE	3/23 SUN	4/7 MON	4/11 FRI	4/12 SAT
STADT HAMBURG	015W	4/12 SAT	4/10 THU	3/31 MON	4/17 THU	4/1 TUE	4/5 SAT	4/18 FRI	4/14 MON	4/13 SUN	4/8 TUE	3/30 SUN	4/14 MON	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT
MELL SENOKO	003W	4/19 SAT	4/17 THU	4/7 MON	4/24 THU	4/8 TUE	4/12 SAT	4/25 FRI	4/21 MON	4/20 SUN	4/15 TUE	4/6 SUN	4/21 MON	4/25 FRI	4/26 SAT
ASIAN ISLAND	008W	4/26 SAT	4/24 THU	4/14 MON	5/1 THU	4/15 TUE	4/19 SAT	5/2 FRI	4/28 MON	4/27 SUN	4/22 TUE	4/13 SUN	4/28 MON	5/2 FRI	5/3 SAT

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Guam	ETD Saipn	ETD Yap	ETD Koror	ETD GenSan	ETD Davao	ETD Cebu	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Manila	ETD Singapore
STADT HAMBURG	014W	4/4 FRI	4/5 SAT	4/5 SAT	4/8 TUE	4/9 WED	4/11 FRI	4/12 SAT	4/15 TUE	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT	4/22 TUE	4/22 TUE	4/20 SUN
MELL SENOKO	002W	4/11 FRI	4/12 SAT	4/12 SAT	SKIP	4/16 WED	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT	4/22 TUE	4/25 FRI	4/26 SAT	4/29 TUE	4/29 TUE	4/27 SUN
ASIAN ISLAND	007W	4/18 FRI	4/19 SAT	4/19 SAT	4/22 TUE	4/23 WED	4/25 FRI	4/26 SAT	4/29 TUE	5/2 FRI	5/3 SAT	5/6 TUE	5/6 TUE	5/4 SUN
STADT HAMBURG	015W	4/25 FRI	4/26 SAT	4/26 SAT	SKIP	4/30 WED	5/2 FRI	5/3 SAT	5/6 TUE	5/9 FRI	5/10 SAT	5/13 TUE	5/13 TUE	5/11 SUN
MELL SENOKO	003W	5/2 FRI	5/3 SAT	5/3 SAT	5/6 TUE	5/7 WED	5/9 FRI	5/10 SAT	5/13 TUE	5/16 FRI	5/17 SAT	5/20 TUE	5/20 TUE	5/18 SUN
ASIAN ISLAND	008W	5/9 FRI	5/10 SAT	5/10 SAT	SKIP	5/14 WED	5/16 FRI	5/17 SAT	5/20 TUE	5/23 FRI	5/24 SAT	5/27 TUE	5/27 TUE	5/25 SUN

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Rising waters threaten Micronesian islands

By PATRICIA LUCE CHAPMAN
ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAJURO, Marshall Islands—The people of the Central Pacific don't need science to understand one possible effect of global warming.

These Micronesians, whose islands spread from near the Philippines on the west to five hours from Hawaii on the east, require no charts or graphs to know that rising ocean water is a critical and constant presence in their lives.

The reality is that, when the moon is full, the ocean waves at high tide are several feet higher than ever in the past, according to longtime island residents.

Many of the tropical islands across the Pacific depend heavily on island-hopping tourism -- scuba diving and snorkeling are the main draws, along with sportfishing. But even the underwater scenery here is threatened by climate and ocean changes that affect the region's living coral reefs.

The powder sand beach of Laura village at the tip of Majuro Atoll, Marshall Islands, is shaded by an impressive stand of three-story-high casuarina pines, along with mangroves, almond, noni and huge breadfruit trees. The beach area is famous throughout the Marshalls for its beauty and tranquility.

Bougainvillea and hibiscus alternate with delicate orchids and fragrant plumeria.

The beach stretches out into the lagoon that meets the Pacific Ocean in ruffles of turquoise water. People like to take their families there to picnic and swim and play volleyball.

But today, the beach is noticeably narrower. Some of the giant trees lie half in the ocean, half on the sand, their gnarled roots reaching up like the desperate fingers of the dying. Beautiful Laura is visibly

losing its sand and its trees to the invasive ocean.

The 7,897-foot asphalt runway of the Amata Kabua International Airport, on the road from the capital, Majuro, to Laura, was constructed by building a causeway across several small islands. It is just wide enough for the two-lane road and the runway, the ocean on one side, the lagoon on the other.

Drains on either side of the runway collect and store fresh rainwater. This runway, only six feet above the ocean, is a major source of fresh drinking water as well as of tourism and trade, and it's vital to the life of the Marshallese.

Sea walls have been built on both sides of the road to the airport and the runway itself, and are now being continued toward Laura.

"Sometimes, the ocean washes across this road. It never did before," says a leading Marshallese, Carmen Bigler, president of Women United Together for the Marshall Islands and the first woman member of the former Congress of Micronesia.

"We don't know what to do about the rising water. We don't want to move from our homes," Bigler said.

The Micronesians' ancestors traveled to their particular atoll or island some 2,500 years ago. Their names and their lineage are

identified by their place of birth.

They want to stay here, and some are working to save their land. Charles T. Domnick, managing director of Anil Development Inc., doesn't want the ocean to wash away his business or his home. He is edging his property with abandoned cars and gutted rusted tankers.

Wilfred Kendall, education minister and former ambassador to the U.S., and his wife, Rosemary, are collecting rocks and cementing them into a sea wall around their land. Importing heavy, hard ironwood for sea walls is too costly, Kendall says.

To the east of the Marshalls, Chuuk, formerly called Truk, is one of the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia. It has a combination of flat coral and high volcanic islands within its lagoon, which is second in size only to Kwajalein Atoll in the Marshalls.

Chuuk is famous for its World War II role when in 1944's "Operation Hailstone" the U.S. sank 41 Japanese ships within the lagoon. These have now become a world-famous attraction for divers and snorkelers.

In addition to the 18 high inhabited islands within the lagoon, there are many idyllic picture postcard flat coral islets of beach and palm trees.

In one of the high islands,

Ruphin Mickey say salt water has killed the taro plants.

Taro is a major source of food for the islanders. Disaster teams have sailed to the area with food and supplies.

The same story is heard from the Mortlocks and other outer islands on the eastern side of Chuuk. The people of the Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, and Guam have also noticed the change.

The people in some other Central Pacific areas have even

more pressing concerns.

The 10,000 people of Tuvalu are negotiating to move to New Zealand.

Kiribati, formerly the Gilbert Islands, has lost two small islands to the ocean and is facing the possibility that their 100,000 people, too, will have to find another homeland. There is less sand and the trees are falling into the ocean.

The question for some islands is, will there be anyone left to hear them fall?

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-Annette A. Donner
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Jägermeister

Companies eye CNMI as staging area in Guam buildup

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Companies hoping to save costs in the upcoming military buildup in Guam are looking at the CNMI as a possible staging ground for their operations.

This was confirmed recently by Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Michael Ada, who said that his office has received quite a number of inquiries from businesses that are interested in warehousing, labor-intensive, and other related activi-

ties on the islands.

Ada said the CNMI is a viable option for these companies because of the islands' lower minimum wage and cheaper leasing terms vis-à-vis that of Guam.

Gov. Bengino R. Fitial's press secretary Charles P. Reyes agrees with Ada's assessment and added that another lure for companies is the Commonwealth's tax incentives and qualifying certificate program.

"Many companies interested in the military buildup in Guam may operate from

the CNMI or be based in the CNMI because of our attractive tax incentives, including the QC program."

Reyes added that, although the minimum wage was raised, the CNMI may still offer lower labor costs compared to Guam, and real estate rental or lease costs may also be lower.

"Lower taxes and lower labor costs may persuade some companies capitalizing on the military build up to base operations in the CNMI."

He said the tax incentives and QC program were two of the

reasons why the government managed to bring in additional air seats in spite of the fact that Japan Airlines pulled out.

In a recent interview with Fitial himself, the islands' chief executive championed the Commonwealth's competitive advantage in getting residual investment from the impending Guam military buildup.

"Because of our tax structure, lower tax rates, and qualifying certificate we stand a better chance at attracting companies that would cater to the military buildup projects than anywhere

in the world," he said during the Covenant Day celebrations held last March 24.

The \$15-billion Guam military buildup is targeted for

2010-2014 following the relocation of 8,000 U.S. Marines and about 9,000 of their dependents to the U.S. territory from Okinawa, Japan.

ERRATA

■ In the story "2008 aviation conference draws record participants" published on April 1, 2008, the correct name of the General Manager of the Pohnpei Port Authority is Ieske Iehsi, not "Leske Iehsi." Our apologies.

■ In the article "Daycares to DCCA: Pay up" published on April 1, 2008, it was stated that "According to Tina Alverio of Smart Start Nurturing Center, she spoke with a 'source' who told her that none of the daycares are in the Treasury system." It was actually another daycare representative who made the statement and not Tina Alverio of Smart Start Nurturing Center. Smart Start Nurturing Center does not have any children under the childcare program. Our apologies.

CHILD

From Page 1

For the new fiscal year—October 1, 2007 to present—there have already been 42 reported cases of child sexual abuse.

"That's a very huge number to begin with," Ogumoro said.

The DYS report, "Statistical Summary of Children, Youth and Families," noted that 112 cases of emotional abuse were reported to the agency in 2007; 115 cases of physical neglect; 25 cases of medical neglect; 78 cases of education neglect, and 108 cases of physical abuse.

Ogumoro said the reported cases of child physical abuse in the CNMI has always been high.

She said, though, that the increasing number of child abuse is a sign that more people have come forward to report them as opposed to 10 years ago, when people would rather keep quiet.

Ogumoro said that she believes that there are more

cases of child abuse going unreported.

"We want people to know that for every report that comes in, identities are protected," she said.

She emphasized that the complete elimination of child abuse in the Northern Marianas would require the all-out support from the community.

"We cannot do it alone. We are urging people to come out and report abuse cases to the DYS or to the police. Don't be afraid to reach out to people who can help you. Community involvement is very important," Ogumoro said.

She said that there has also been an increase in teenage pregnancies and female teenagers shacking up with boyfriends who are three years or older than they are.

DYS is still in the middle of compiling the report for both types of cases.

April is Child Abuse Awareness Month. The event seeks to increase community involvement in preventing child abuse in the CNMI.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BUDDY WALKERS

Northern Marianas College Nursing Students smile for the camera during the 3rd annual Buddy Walk at the Garapan Fishing Base Saturday morning. The group provided free vital sign and blood glucose screening for the participants.

FORUM

From Page 1

■ Dekada Movement counsel Stephen C. Woodruff;

■ Governor's legal counsel Deanne Siemer, who is actively involved in labor and immigration matters, PL 15-108, and the new labor regulations;

■ CNMI Bar Association president Maya Kara, who is a former acting Attorney General, former governor's legal counsel, former lieutenant governor's legal counsel, and former House legal counsel; and

■ Greg Cruz, president of TaoTao Tano.

Both Siemer and Kara emphasized that they are involved

and will speak only for themselves, in their personal capacities, and not as representatives of the government, clients, or any special interest group.

Other speakers may be added, and there will be extensive opportunity for questions, answers, and general discussion.

"This forum is NOT about 'federalization.' It is NOT about

minimum wage. It is NOT about Public Law 15-108. It is specifically recognized that all parties have their own views and positions on these topics, and agreed that all are free to advocate their positions outside the forum, but that, within the context of the forum, these issues will be put to the side and the focus will be exclusively on the question of

long-term alien resident status," the group said in a statement.

A minimum donation of \$2 per person will be required at the door to cover the costs of use of the Monte Carlo facilities. The two-dollar donation entitles each person to one beverage from the house. Additional beverages may be purchased at usual Monte Carlo prices.

This is the third meeting on the long-term resident status public discussion initiative. The first preliminary, exploratory meeting, involving only a very small group, was held on March 11, 2008, in the conference room of Woodruff. The second meeting of 30 to 40 persons was on March 22, 2008, at the China House restaurant. (*Saipan Tribune*)

2ND

From Page 1

ment Corp. reiterated his opposition to the tiered wage hike mandated by H.R. 2066 in his "From the President" section of the Chamber newsletter for the month of April, saying that the CNMI has a unique and fairly closed economy "and it is at a breaking point."

He said there is little money coming in for businesses to allow for wages of the islands' lowest-paid workers to rise from \$3.55 to \$4.05 an hour starting May 26, 2008.

Arenovski said businesses maybe forced to take the following measures in order to survive the next round of minimum wage hikes:

■ Further employee work hour reductions: Moving from 40-hour to a 34- or 36-hour per pay period saves money. Paying one employee overtime if managed properly can be cheaper than hiring two full-time employees and finding the hours to keep both happy;

■ Reduction in workforce: Every person who is laid off has no money to pay for basic requirements and, if he has benefits, they would be gone too;

■ Increased prices for goods and services: Businesses usually increase prices when the cost of operation increases; and

■ Close the business down: Many businesses have done their best to remain open and provide a level of service and quality expected by customers. Once a business gets to a point where it no longer has the customers or revenue to meet the rising costs of doing business and remain profitable, it may close down.

The last and most radical measure Arenovski suggested would have a disastrous ripple effect on the local economy.

"Closing a business means all staff are out of work and vendors get paid late or don't get paid and the government loses tax revenue," he said.

The Chamber president also said that, besides the rise in minimum wage, businesses in the CNMI are also battered by the high cost of electricity, gasoline, shipping, and imported raw materials.

"They all negatively affect the cost of doing business, prices, and a company's ability to remain open," said Arenovski.

"As I have said many times before, 'who can argue that making money is not better...

making more is indeed better.' But will the majority benefit? Will it get worse before it gets better?" he asked.

That 50-cent increase last July 24, which hiked the CNMI minimum wage of \$3.05 an hour to \$3.55 an hour, kicked off the nine-step increase of 50 cents every year that will eventually raise the CNMI minimum wage to the federal level of \$7.25 an hour.

H.R. 2066 also includes a provision requiring the U.S. Labor secretary to conduct a study to assess the impact of the wage increases and to project the impact of any further wage increase on

living standards and employment rates in the CNMI and American Samoa. The study must be done two years and two months after the bill becomes law.

The swift passage of the minimum wage hike bill came about because it was attached to the Iraq war spending bill as a rider.

Before July 2007, the last time the CNMI's minimum wage was increased was 11 years ago.

Business representatives and the CNMI government are currently lobbying Congress to pass a law suspending the next round of minimum wage hikes.

IF DAYCARES PROCEED WITH BOYCOTT

DCCA to use other daycares

By **RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN**
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REPORTER

The Department of Community and Cultural Affairs is standing firm, saying that if child care providers withhold services to recipients of child care certificates, the department will have no choice but to "promote referral of affected parents to other child care providers who also meet the standards."

At the same time, Faisao said it is not their intention to make it hard on anyone but if the daycare centers want to be paid on time, they should comply with the new requirements.

"We're not trying to put

anyone in an impediment. We just want to have a transparent and accountable record, and we want it to be consistent. That is all," said Faisao. "We are not trying to give anybody a hard time."

This came about after some 16 daycare centers complained Monday about not being paid by DCCA for about two months now. They threatened to withhold services to child care certificate holders until they are compensated for services already rendered.

In a letter to DCCA acting secretary Melvin LO Faisao, CNMI Daycare Association president Masina Leuta stated

that "provision of childcare services allows for a narrow margin and any delay between provision of services and payment for said services places us in vulnerable position," he said.

Faisao, however, disputed the two-month arrears. "First of all, clarification needs to reflect that DCCA does not owe the childcare providers a two-month service," he said.

He explained that when a childcare service is done, the request for payment is processed in 15 working days. The first three working days of the month is when childcare provider must submit invoices. The department then reviews

it for consistency and accuracy within two working days. The department then prepares Purchase Requisitions to be submitted to Procurement and Supply so that Purchase Orders can be generated. After the Purchase Order goes to the Department of Finance, it goes to the Division of Treasury.

Faisao said that because the department is on a transition period, all vendors must comply with the requirements: submission of W-9 Form/Tax Identification Number and an updated business license.

He said they implemented this new set of requirements because they have noticed that

there have been many individuals who had been abusing the childcare program.

"We have seen that there were some who were claiming services for children beyond 13 years of age. We have also seen that some have come in as single parent but in their 10-40, they are actually con-

sidered joint and income is above the threshold. Even if it's just by three or four dollars, we have to comply with that threshold," Faisao said.

He said the new requirements are also a way of capturing data if and when the new lead agency should submit valuable information back to its grantor.



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Contact Julie at 287-6542 to schedule an appointment.



Bill eases retirement regs for those with disabilities

A lawmaker has introduced legislation easing certification requirements for potential retirees who have disabilities.

Rep. Joseph Reyes, a former chairman of the NMI Retirement Fund, says that the current requirements are too difficult to satisfy and have failed to achieve the intended purpose.

Under existing law, a potential disabled retiree must be evaluated by two physicians and a vocational rehabilitation counselor, and get certification that he or she is totally and permanently disabled due to physical or mental incapacitation.

According to Reyes, OVR counselors lack medical and psychiatric expertise or credentials to issue such certification. This situation has created a hardship for OVR, for the retirees, and for the Retirement Fund.

"This legal requirement of OVR counselors places the office in the untenable situation of either requiring counselors to make judgments that are beyond the scope of their training, or not complying with the law. Both courses of action could be detrimental to retirees and or to the Retirement Fund," Reyes states in his bill.

He adds that a certification by two physicians, of whom one is a specialist in the area of disability being evaluated, is enough to protect the Fund and its members from abuse.

To become law, the bill must be passed by both the House and Senate, and approved by the governor. *(Agnes E. Donato)*

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The Department of Public Health's
Community Guidance Center (CGC),
and partners, is pleased to announce the...

4th ANNUAL KICK BUTTS DAY (KBD)

march and rally, on April 2, 2008, from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.



- The event features a march from the Garapan Fishing Base to the Carolinian Affairs Office.
- We encourage all schools to bring their school banner as a show of school spirit and representation.
- Schools will compete in a 10 minutes dance-off competition and most (cigarette) butts collected for a 10-year Perpetual Plaque.
- Light refreshments, educational exhibitors, entertainment, and giveaways

For more information please contact the Community Guidance Center at 323-6584, 85, 86, 95.



Saipan Tribune, the CNMI's first daily newspaper, is looking for fresh talent to join our team.

REPORTER

- At least two years' experience writing for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must know how to write hard news, features, and business stories;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, analytical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Computer literate and with driver's license.

SPORTS REPORTER

- At least two years' experience covering sports for a newspaper or magazine;
- Must have competent grasp of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax;
- College graduate (Journalism, Communication, Creative Writing, English majors a plus)
- Must be methodical, detail-oriented, and can work fast within strict deadlines;
- Must be willing to put in flexible work hours;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, aggressive, and a team player;
- Computer literate and with driver's license;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be passionate about sports.

ART DIRECTOR

- At least five years' experience in the publishing industry or related field;
- Must have at least two years' supervisory experience in the field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have extensive knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

GRAPHIC ARTIST

- At least three years' experience in the publishing business or related field;
- High proficiency in Adobe CS applications (InDesign, Illustrator, and Photoshop); knowledge of other applications for print and web a plus;
- Deep familiarity with Mac environment; knowledge in PC is a plus;
- College graduate (Fine Arts, Graphic Design or related course);
- Must have basic knowledge in digital pre-press production and printing;
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be creative, resourceful, and can work fast.

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

- At least high school graduate;
- Typing speed of at least 40 words per minute
- Must have extensive experience using Microsoft Office applications (Word, Excel, PowerPoint);
- Must be familiar with Mac computers (knowledge in PC is a plus);
- Must be willing to work on holidays, weekends;
- Must be a fast learner, self-starter, and a team player.

If you think you have what it takes to be part of this dynamic team, submit your most recent résumé and portfolio to the *Saipan Tribune*, located on the second floor of the CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan. Or e-mail it to editor@saipantribune.com. On-island hires preferred.

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

\$30K for Rota students' transfer

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial has signed into law two bills appropriating poker fees collected on Rota and on Tinian.

Tinian Local Law 16-1 appropriates \$98,000 to financial aid awarded by the Tinian Municipal Scholarship Board.

Rota Local Law 16-1 appropriates \$149,000 from local poker license fees to different programs in the First Senatorial District.

The Rota appropriation is distributed as follows: \$30,000 for the transfer of students from the Northern Marianas College Rota campus to the NMC campus on

Saipan; \$2,000 for the JROTC program; \$5,000 for the Rota man'amko; \$44,000 for dialysis or terminally ill patients from Rota who are receiving treatment on Saipan; \$50,000 for the mayor's trade mission; and \$18,000 for the operations of the Rota legislative delegation.

"I have approved the various appropriations in this legislation as I believe that they are all beneficial to the needs of the people and island of Rota," Fitial said in signing the Rota law.

The governor specifically mentioned the funds appropriated for the students who were

affected by the suspension of NMC Rota academic programs. He added that the funds appropriated for the mayor's trade mission and the legislative delegation "will continue working toward improving the Rota economy."

Each senatorial district charges local poker fees, amounting to \$6,000 per machine on Saipan and \$4,000 on Rota and Tinian.

In addition, the CNMI government imposes a \$6,000 fee for each poker machine operated in the Commonwealth.

(*Agnes E. Donato*)

Fitial tightens fed grant application process

By **AGNES E. DONATO**
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial wants to get a first look at federal grant applications submitted by local agencies.

In a memorandum, the governor called on department and agency heads to coordinate federal grants with his office. His directive came amid an apparent practice among grant recipients of informing the administration after the fact.

"Before submitting a federal grant application to my office for approval, please make sure that I am fully consulted in advance, at the beginning of the process rather than at the end of the process when my approval

is expected," Fitial said.

He added that the Governor's Office must be thoroughly briefed on federal grant terms, conditions and requirements before he can approve any grants on behalf of the CNMI government.

There has been a case when Fitial administration declined a federal grant because of the terms and conditions involved.

The administration refused an initial \$420,000 grant supposedly for the local labor and immigration system, as well as another \$350,000 that was to have followed it. The federal government has started distributing the

amount to other CNMI agencies such as Karidat.

The Public School System, Department of Labor, and Department of Public Safety are among the government agencies that rely heavily on federal grants.

The U.S. Office of Insular Affairs administers the most federal grant programs that benefit the Commonwealth

and U.S. insular areas. In fiscal year 2007, OIA offered approximately \$73 million to insular areas in the form of grants of financial assistance. This excludes mandatory funding to the insular areas.



Fitial



NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES

BOARD VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The board of directors for the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities (Council) wishes to announce two board vacancies. Applicants can be from Tinian, Rota and Saipan.

The Council's board comprises thirteen volunteer members who serve three year terms and can be renewed once only. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our community. The ideal candidates will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities. Council members are expected to engage in creative development of programs; encourage regrant applicants and recipients on their programs; and be active in the Council activities as well as the administrative requirements. Council members are unlike the usual board membership in that they are often called upon to participate in programs, develop programs; and promote programs of the Council.

The Council is a non-profit private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The Council's mission is to foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Humanities through support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and to the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth.

Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually.
- Attending periodic committee meetings.
- Evaluating Council programs and activities.
- Reviewing grant applications.
- Raising funds.
- Providing input from the community.
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings relating to the humanities.
- Willing to spend from 2-4 hours per month on Council activities, particularly as Chair of a committee.

Interested residents are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Herman T. Guerrero, Chair, Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities, P.O. Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950 or fax them to the Council at 235-4786**. Letters and resumes must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on April 15, 2008. For additional information please contact the Council's Executive Director at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website site at <http://nmi.humanities.org>.

April is Environmental Awareness Month

By **RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN**
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Tim Villagomez signed a proclamation declaring April as Environmental Awareness Month, in celebration of the Division of Environmental Quality's 25 years of service in the CNMI.

The proclamation signing, which took place at the Governor's Conference Room, was also intended to raise awareness for the upcoming Earth Day.

The proclamation stated that, to mark DEQ's 25th anniversary, the event could be used as an opportunity to appreciate one's own natural heritage, increase ecological awareness and to take active steps to protect and preserve the islands' natural re-

source.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial declared 2008 as the International Year of the Reef. DEQ has adopted the national theme, "Our reefs enrich our health, our wealth, our lives."

The theme aims to emphasize that coral reefs are part of the islands' subsistence and culture and that they provide a home for thousands of reef organisms and are known for their medicinal value.

Coral reefs also protect the island's shoreline from storms and erosion, "and provide the foundation for our eco-tourism industry."

Earth Day, which is on April 22, is a day for every individual and institution to think and act as a responsible trustee of the



Villagomez

Earth, ecologically, economically and ethically, to create a sustainable future without pollution.

Villagomez urged all citizens of the Commonwealth to take an active interest in their environment and help protect it for the benefit of future generations.

"I urge all citizens and organizations of the Commonwealth to observe the month in recognition of our goal of maintaining a healthy, clean, and beautiful Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands," he said.

Emmanuel College starts registration for new batch

The economic slowdown in the U.S. mainland has sent government and private sector chief executives scrambling for ways to cut expenses, with the employment of ordinary workers almost always the first target.

Faced with the grim picture of a national economic meltdown caused by the collapse of the housing industry, U.S. employers slashed in February 2008 about 63,000 jobs in every business sector—except in the healthcare industry where the U.S. Department of Labor reported consistent job gains.

Emmanuel College, the first and only private higher educational institution of its kind in the CNMI, is beefing up its efforts to help Northern Marianas residents pursue "recession-proof" careers as it opened registration for the second batch of its Vocational Nursing Program.

Emmanuel College nursing program director Cherry Castro said employment of vocational nurses is expected to grow faster than other occupations through the year 2012 in response to the long-term healthcare needs of America's "graying" population.

As baby boomers approach the age of retirement, they change the age structure of the U.S. toward a population with more older people and a higher average age. Together with this shift is the increasing demand for healthcare professionals across the nation, Castro said.

Nurses—both registered and vocational—command higher pay and better incentives, and Castro attributes this to the stiffer competition among employers, such as hospitals and long-term care facilities, for nurses.

In California, a licensed vocational nurse normally receives an hourly rate of \$24-\$28, excluding signing bonuses and a long list of incentives.

The annual vacancy rate for

nurses in the U.S. alone is approximately 9 percent, and projections anticipate a shortage of 800,000 nurses by 2050. Other estimates, such as that of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, are more dramatic, perhaps reaching 1 million vacancies to be filled by 2012.

"The Vocational Nursing Program offered by Emmanuel College is one of the surest ways to establish a career that is recession-proof," said Castro. "With the way things are throughout the world right now, nurses are not likely to be the ones looking for jobs. It's the job that will look for nurses."

Emmanuel College is now accepting applications for the second batch of its Vocational Nursing Program—an 11-month study that prepares stu-

dents to both the theoretical and clinical aspects of the nursing profession.

Classes for the second batch will start in June 2008. For more information, call Emmanuel College at (670) 235-5139/7161. Application forms are also available at its Saipan campus: Ground Floor, Pacific Towers, formerly Koreana Hotel, Chalan Kanoa, Saipan.

Illuminanda R. Bermudes
P.O. Box 502796
Saipan, MP 96950
Tel. No. 234-8196

Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER) FCD AD
OF THE) NO. 08-0161
ADOPTION OF:)
) NOTICE OF
E. I. R. B. Jr.) HEARING
Minor Child)
)
By:)
)
ILLUMINANDA)
REYES)
BERMUDES)
Petitioner)

Notice is hereby given that
the above-entitled matter is set for a
hearing May 15, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. in
Courtroom 205A, before the
Associate Judge Kenneth L.
Govendo.

Dated this 1st day of April,
2008.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/
By: Deputy Clerk of Court



COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION



SCHEDULE OF ELECTRIC CHARGES AND RATES FOR THE MONTH OF APRIL 2008

CUSTOMER CLASSIFICATIONS	MONTHLY CUSTOMER CHARGES (FIXED)	RATES PER KILOWATT-HOUR (kWh)		
		ELECTRIC NON-FUEL RATES (FIXED)	ELECTRIC FUEL RATES (FLUCTUATES)	TOTAL RATES PER kWh
RESIDENTIAL First 1,000 kWh Over 1,000 kWh	\$ 3.50	\$ 0.000 \$ 0.044	\$ 0.176 0.176	\$ 0.176 0.220
COMMERCIAL (All kWh Billed)	\$ 7.67	\$ 0.086	\$ 0.327	\$ 0.413
GOVERNMENT (All kWh Billed)	\$ 7.67	\$ 0.091	\$ 0.327	\$ 0.418
NON-CONFORMING LOAD (All kWh Billed)	\$ 56.00	\$ 0.222	\$ 0.327	\$ 0.549

HISTORY OF ELECTRIC FUEL RATES:

JANUARY 2007	\$ 0.196	SEPTEMBER 2007	\$ 0.228
FEBRUARY 2007	\$ 0.188	OCTOBER 2007 (RES)	\$ 0.176
MARCH 2007	\$ 0.188	OCTOBER 2007	\$ 0.228
APRIL 2007	\$ 0.191	NOVEMBER 2007	\$ 0.258
MAY 2007	\$ 0.222	DECEMBER 2007	\$ 0.258
JUNE 2007	\$ 0.221	JANUARY 2008	\$ 0.258
JULY 2007	\$ 0.223	FEBRUARY 2008	\$ 0.253
AUGUST 2007	\$ 0.223	MARCH 2008	\$ 0.288

Pursuant to Public Law 15-94, the residential fuel rate is set at 17.6 cents per kilowatt-hour.

Europe Highlights

Tour 2008

France, Luxembourg, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Italy.

June 14-29, 2008

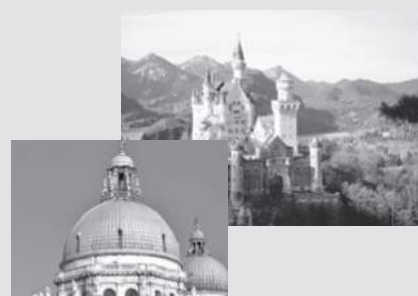
\$3,485⁰⁰

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EEOC sues 99 Cents supermarket

The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has filed a federal discrimination lawsuit against 99 Cents Supermarket, which operates on Saipan, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The EEOC alleges that the store manager subjected female employees to sex harassment and that the employer retaliated against one employee by not renewing her work contract because she complained about the harassment. The sex harassment allegedly included unwelcome touching when the store manager repeatedly slapped female employees on their buttocks either with his hand or with a textile tube.

Although the company owners received notice of the harassment, the company

failed to take appropriate action to investigate and correct any sexual harassment, EEOC said. Instead, the complaining employee lost her job.

EEOC's Regional Attorney Anna Park said, "The EEOC is committed to protecting employees whose employers retaliate against them for exercising their rights against discrimination. All workers—local and nonresident—have the right to work in an environment free of daily harassment and retaliation. We encourage victims of harassment and retaliation to step forward and notify the EEOC."

The EEOC filed the suit (EEOC v. 99 Cents Supermarket, Inc., et al, CV 08-0019) in U.S. District Court for the District of the Northern Mariana

Islands, after first attempting a voluntary settlement.

The Commission seeks lost wages, compensation for emotional distress, punitive damages, and injunctive relief to prevent and correct any future workplace discrimination.

EEOC Honolulu Local Director Timothy Riera said, "No one should have to endure being sexually harassed to earn a paycheck or keep their employment. The failure to renew the employment contract of an employee complaining about sex harassment is a problem that immigrant workers face. The EEOC works to ensure equal job opportunity for all workers."

In addition to enforcing Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits employment discrimination based on

race, color religion, sex (including sexual harassment or pregnancy) or national origin and protects employees who complain about such offenses from retaliation, the EEOC enforces the Age Discrimination in Employment Act; the Equal Pay Act of 1963; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities in the federal sector; Title I of the American with Disabilities Act, which prohibits employment discrimination against people with disabilities in the private sector and state and local governments; and sections of the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

Further information about the Commission is available on the agency's website at www.eeoc.gov. (EEOC)

Tune-up scheduled for Saipan Zoning Law

The Commonwealth Zoning Board is seeking comments on updates to the Saipan Zoning Law.

Since the law went into effect on Feb. 1, the Zoning Board has received several requests for changing the boundaries of the zones and the standards for development.

"We agree that the law could use some fine-tuning and want to hear from the community about these proposed changes," said Zoning Board chair Henry Hofschneider.

The proposed amendments affect many parts of the law including: definitions of terms; exemptions and area of jurisdiction; the types of uses permitted in certain zones; standards for temporary uses and roadside merchandise stands; standards for certain uses; building design; signs and lighting; lot line adjust-



Tilley

ments; subdivisions; road standards; and editorial cleanup. The proposed map changes would affect 19 of 29 sheets on the official zoning map. These rezones include proposals from property owners and developers, government agencies, and Zoning Administrator Steve Tilley.

To help the public understand the proposal, the Zoning Office will offer a public information session on April 22, 2007 at 2pm, with a repeat session at 6:30pm. The sessions will be held at the Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe.

The Zoning Board will hold a public hearing on the proposal on April 29, 2008 at 6:30pm in the Multi-Purpose Center, Susupe.

The public may view the proposed amendments and map changes at several locations: Zoning Office, 2nd Floor, Joeten Building, DanDan; Joeten-Kiyu Public Library; and on the Zoning Board website: www.zoning.gov.mp (publications page).

After the public hearing, the Zoning Board will make a decision on whether to approve any or all of the changes to

the official zoning maps. The board will also decide whether to recommend any or all of the amendments to the Saipan Zoning Law for adoption by the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation.

Comments on the proposal may be submitted orally or in writing at the public hearing. Written comments may be submitted directly to the Zoning Office and they must be received at the Zoning Office by 4:30pm, April 30, 2008. People should send written comments via e-mail to staff@zoning.gov.mp, via U.S. mail to Caller Box 10007, Saipan, MP 96950, or deliver them to the Zoning Office, 2nd floor, Joeten Building, DanDan, Saipan.

Anyone with questions about the proposal may call the Zoning Office at 234-9663. (Zoning Board)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

APRIL 2, 1999

Panel endorses bank-reform legislation

The House Commerce and Tourism Committee has recommended immediate passage of a legislation overhauling operations of banks and other financial institutions on the island, saying these reforms will safeguard the half-a-billion dollar sector. It will also widen the scope or ownership of Commonwealth banks and simplify the administrative procedures associated with the licensing and operations, according to a committee report.

CDA eases terms on loans payback

The Commonwealth Development Authority has taken steps to help locally-owned businesses weather the current economic crisis through flexible loan repayment terms and other assistance aimed at easing financial burden on their borrowers. Marylou S. Ada, executive director of the chief government chief lending agency, said these measures have been put in place even before a request for assistance from lawmakers came.

FCC funds sought for health care

The Northern Marianas has pressed the Federal Communications Commission to overhaul its Universal Service Rural Health Care Program in order to free up vital telecommunications funding intended for local health care system. Due to declining cash resources, the Commonwealth hopes to avail of the funds granted under the Telecommunications Act implemented in 1996 which provides for the rural health care program.

APRIL 2, 2001

Harsher penalties against child rights violators eyed

The CNMI government on Friday stressed the need to expedite approval of the proposed changes to the existing anti-child abuse law, in hopes to prevent the increasing cases of child rights violation in the Commonwealth. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio underscored the need for immediate changes to the existing law Friday after he officially designated April as the Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month.

Continental looks at 8 new markets for CNMI

Continental Airlines is reviewing possible deployment of non-stop flights out of eight emerging markets primarily spurred by the slow recovery of the Japanese economy from deep financial upheavals. This, as Continental Airlines yesterday launched its Saipan-Nagoya direct flights with 155 passengers onboard including 10 individuals representing different media entities in Japan.

Administration submits higher FY2002 budget

The Administration of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio has finalized the proposed Fiscal Year 2002 budget allocation of about \$229 million, up from the previous year's \$221.66 million. The increase in the proposed FY2002 budget mirrors the additional revenues expected to be generated by the CNMI government during the forthcoming financial year, according to Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio.

APRIL 2, 2002

Chamber backs Farallon bombing

Saying that a pullout by the military from the CNMI would be disastrous to its already ailing economy, the Saipan Chamber of Commerce yesterday took the cudgels in defense of the U.S. Navy's bombing practices on Farallon de Mendinilla. This, as the Navy plans to appeal an adverse decision of a federal court in connection with the military exercises on the island.

CPA scrambles to meet obligations

The Commonwealth Ports Authority's revenue from Fiscal Year 2001 to the first five months of the current financial year fell short of the original projection to merit a full coverage of the agency's existing financial obligations. This prodded CPA officials to explore the possibility of restructuring payment of loans obtained from the Commonwealth Development Authority. Ports officials will also revisit its revised budget for FY2002 and look into alternative revenue sources, as well as streamline operational costs and other recommendations that would assist the CPA meet its obligations to the Franklin Fund.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Eleventh CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Regular Board Meeting on Friday, April 4, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. at the Pacific Islands Club (PIC) - Napu Room, in San Antonio, Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Preliminary
 - a. Call to Order
 - b. Roll Call
 - c. Adoption of Agenda
 - d. Adoption of Minutes
- II. Public Comments¹
- III. Reports
 - a. Chair
 - b. Committees
 - c. Commissioner
 - i. Programs
 - ii. Special Education
 - iii. Head Start
 - d. Teacher Representative
 - e. Non-Public School Representative
 - f. Student Representative
- IV. Old Business
 - a. BOE Office Manager position
- V. New Business
 - a. PEP (Physical Education Program) Grant
 - b. Libraries Grant
 - c. 2008-2009 Head Start Grant Application
 - d. PSS FY'08 Budget
 - e. PSS FY'09 Budget
 - f. Retirement contributions
 - g. Amendment to BOE Bylaws
 - i. Article X, Section 2 and 3 to add another standing committee: Committee on Special Education and Head Start Programs
 - ii. Article XI, Section 7 to replace the *Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure* with the *Robert's Rules of Order* to assist determining appropriate procedures to follow in the absence of such in the bylaws.
- VI. VII. Executive Session²
 - a. Legal Counsel's Report
 - i. Case Updates
 - ii. San Antonio School Parking Lot
 - b. Personnel
 - i. Rota High School matter
 - ii. Grievance matter
 - iii. BOE Personnel matter
 - c. Other matters
- VII. Miscellaneous Matters
- VIII. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting
- IX. Adjournment

¹ Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes and related to issues on the agenda.
² Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.



COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Position: Field Office Representative **Opening Date:** March 14, 2008
Salary: PL 32-1, \$24,889.35 per annum **Closing Date:** April 14, 2008
 to PL 32-5, \$30,246.74 per annum

Job Location: NMHC Field Office, Island of Rota, MP 96950

Detailed job description, qualification requirements and other information may be picked up, together with NMHC's employment application form, during regular working hours at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, OR at the NMHC Rota Field Office, during regular working hours, 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

All applicants must complete and submit the NMHC Employment Application Form together with required documents that are listed in the Employment Application Package. Failure to provide the required documents will result in automatic disqualification. NMHC and all its properties are drug-free zones; therefore, selected applicant will be subject to pre-employment drug screening.

Applicants are requested to submit their original application and supporting documents to the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan, no later than 4:30 p.m., Monday, April 14, 2008, **OR MAILED AND POSTMARKED** no later than April 14, 2008, to the Corporate Director, Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950.

It is the policy of the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) that the merit system will be applied and administered according to the principle of equal opportunity for all citizens and nationals as defined by its personnel regulations and the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Constitution regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, disability or place of origin.

For inquiries, please contact Edith C. Fejeran, Office Manager at (670) 234-9447/7689 or by email to ecfejeran@nmhc.gov.mp NMHC is a fair housing agency and an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.

/s/ JOSHUA T. SASAMOTO
Corporate Director

Island Snapshots



BANK OF HAWAII DONATION

MARK MENDIOLA

The Bank of Hawaii has donated \$4,500 to the NMC Foundation to support its fundraising golf tournament, which will be held April 26, 2008, at the Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort. Picture shows John Sheather, Bank of Hawaii's CNMI district manager, second from right, turning over the check to NMC president Carmen Fernandez. Others in picture are NMC Foundation president Ben Babauta, left, and Michael von Siebenthal, chair of the Foundation Golf Tournament, right.



PALMS RESORT DONATION

MARK MENDIOLA

Palms Resort Saipan donates \$2,500 to the NMC Foundation for its fundraising golf tournament, which will be held April 26, 2008, at the Lao Lao Bay Golf Resort. Picture shows Hiroyuki Saito, president and COO and general manager of Palms Resort Saipan, second from left, turning over the check to NMC president Carmen Fernandez, center. Others in picture are, from left, Michael von Siebenthal, chair of the Foundation Golf Tournament; NMC Foundation president Ben Babauta, and Foundation board member Yoichi Matsumura.



INDEPENDENCE DAY

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Members of the Bangladeshi community on Saipan perform a traditional song number during the celebration of their Independence Day at the Garapan Central Park on March 26, 2008. The Bangladeshi community has been celebrating their Independence Day in the CNMI since 1995, during which close to 400 Bangladeshis come together to celebrate this event.



MARINE MONUMENT

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Pew Environmental group project director Jay Nelson gestures as he delivers his presentation on the Marine Monument proposal to representatives of CRM, DEQ, MVA and MINA at the Coastal Resources Management office in San Jose Thursday afternoon.



Members of the Bangladeshi community on Saipan gather for a photo with Dekada officials and Rep. Tina Sablan, who graciously attended the celebration of the Bangladesh Independence Day at the Garapan Central Park.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

JAZZ APPRECIATION MONTH

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela signs a proclamation designating April as Jazz Appreciation Month while Paz Younis, executive director of the NMI Humanities Council, looks on at the Mayor's Office conference room Thursday afternoon. A collaborative effort between the Saipan Mayor's Office and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, Jazz Appreciation Month observes and pays tribute to the founding fathers of jazz.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



COVENANT DAY DEBATE

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

CNMI's 6th annual Covenant Day Debate senior division winner Marianas High School's Rachel Reyes and junior division winner Marianas Baptist Academy's Mark Liban are joined by their competitors, MBA's Laura Lee and MBA's Dong Hee Im, during the awarding ceremony at the American Memorial Park Visitor Center Thursday night last week. The debate is on whether non-U.S. citizens should be allowed to serve on CNMI juries. NMI Council for the Humanities sponsored the event in conjunction with the National Forensic League and the Middle School Forensic League.



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

CNMI's 6th annual Covenant Day Debate senior division winner Marianas High School's Rachel Reyes delivers her speech while Marianas Baptist Academy's Laura Lee listen during the competition at the American Memorial Park Visitor Center Thursday night.



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

CNMI's 6th annual Covenant Day Debate senior division winner Marianas High School's Rachel Reyes and junior division winner Marianas Baptist Academy's Mark Liban join MBA's Laura Lee and MBA's Dong Hee Im, NMI Council for the Humanities board members, judges and moderator for a photo during the awarding ceremony at the American Memorial Park Visitor Center Thursday night last week.

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

The Vienna Convention

Jose Ernesto Medellin is a Mexican national who has lived in the United States for most of his life. In 1993, he was arrested in connection with the rape and murder of two Texas girls. Although he was read his Miranda rights and was defended by two court-appointed lawyers, Texas law enforcement officials failed to inform Mr. Medellin of his right under the Vienna Convention to notify the Mexican consulate of his arrest. Mr. Medellin was ultimately convicted and sentenced to death, but he failed to raise the Vienna Convention argument at trial or during sentencing and did so in federal court only after he filed a habeas petition.

Mexico filed a grievance with the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the judicial arm of the United Nations. The ICJ ruled three years ago that the United States had violated the rights of Mr. Medellin and 50 other Mexican nationals after failing to inform them of their Vienna Convention rights. The ICJ declared that the United States should review these cases to determine whether the defendants had been harmed by the lack of notification; the court also concluded that procedural rules, such as those in Texas barring introduction of new arguments in appellate proceedings unless they've been raised earlier in the process, could not be used to block a new review. After the ICJ ruling, President Bush issued a memorandum saying that the states should comply with the judgment of the ICJ. Texas balked, giving rise to the case decided by the Supreme Court last week.

A 6 to 3 majority wisely decided that rulings from the ICJ do not automatically trump state laws and procedures. It also ruled that if the president believed it was important to respect the ICJ edict he should have engaged Congress and the states to fashion a solution that would give the ruling legal effect in the United States without explicitly undermining U.S. and state sovereignty. In a brief filed earlier in the Medellin case, Texas suggested that the president, with the state's cooperation, could create a panel of former federal judges to review the 51 cases. This would avert constitutional conflict, while respecting the spirit of the ICJ ruling and signaling to the world the United States' recognition of its treaty obligations. As Justice John Paul Stevens wrote in his concurring opinion, "The Court's judgment, which I join, does not foreclose further appropriate action by the State of Texas."

In the future, the federal and state governments should be meticulous in upholding the stricture of the convention; law enforcement officers should be told that they must make foreign nationals aware of their Vienna Convention rights, just as they now inform them of their right to remain silent. It's the least the country can do, especially if it expects its nationals to receive fair treatment in a foreign land.

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Enter the Saipanpreneur Zone, Part I

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and move beyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

Eight years ago, the 12th Legislature of the CNMI enacted Public Law 12-020, or the Northern Mariana Islands Free Trade Zone Act of 2000. If you're new to the island, as I am, or if you've never read the actual text of the Act, I'd like to share some of it with you in a new series of articles. It is my hope that the information, inspiration and ideas contained within may inspire your own unique business idea. And, whether your business qualifies for Free Trade Zone status or not, I hope you'll be encouraged to take further steps to bring your ideas to life. Therefore, let's start with the opening lines of the act:

[Excerpt] Section 2. Findings and Purpose.

The Legislature finds that it is in the best interest of the Commonwealth to establish free trade zones as an economic development tool to encourage the establishment of new business, industrial and commercial activities in order to diversify the Commonwealth economy. Two industries, tourism and garment manufacturing, constitute the current economic base of the CNMI. As recent events, including the prolonged economic downturn in Asia, have demonstrated, this economy is extremely vulnerable to forces outside of the CNMI's control. In addition, it appears that apparel manufacturing activity may lessen in the Commonwealth in the next several years as international trade agreements affecting tariffs make other international manufacturing locations more economically attractive than the CNMI.

The Legislature further finds that it is in the best interests of the people of the Commonwealth to take aggressive actions to broaden the CNMI's economic base through diversification. The Legislature further finds that the types of business, industrial and commercial activity that are in the best long term interests of the people of the CNMI are those that require significant capital investment, are low

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT

Creating economic success for the CNMI

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

labor intensive, have negligible impact on the environment, and are compatible with tourism. Illustrative examples of such types of desirable business activities would be: production of computer hardware and software, licensing and distribution of intellectual property, computer programming services, data base storage and retrieval, financial and trade related services. These examples are illustrative only, not limiting. Such businesses will attract skilled and highly paid employees, and will provide meaningful training opportunities for the citizens of the CNMI. The Commonwealth's leading industry will remain tourism so businesses in the free trade zones must not cloud the air, foul the beaches or contaminate the aquifer. [End excerpt]

I particularly support the idea of businesses, processes and residual effects not clouding the air, fouling the beaches or contaminating the water. I would add to that focusing on natural resources and recycling to find unique uses for natural resources and recyclables. Here are a few ideas.

"Green" Businesses Ideas: Food, clothing and shelter from things natural and used.

Coconuts, Coconuts, Coconuts!

I'm a huge fan of the untapped potential of the tropically ubiquitous coconut. The fruit, the husk, the tree, the leaves, the sap—all have a variety of uses. Did you know that people make ropes and yarns, aquarium filters, car seat covers, boats, flower pots, soundproofing, mulch for plant growing, heat insulation, brushes, bristles, mattresses, door mats and matting, rugs and carpets from coconut? Did you

See ENTER on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Letters to the Editor**What a \$7,901 circumcision really means**

I hope that everybody saw the article about the family that asked the price of a circumcision at CHC, was quoted \$250, couldn't do it because no physician was available for a few months, and then did it and discovered that the charge was almost \$8,000. CHC did in fact raise its rates recently for some services by about 4,000 percent. Now if Saipan was inhabited by Microsoft millionaires, this might be a sustainable economic practice, but the demographics of the island make rate changes like this unlikely to work.

What needs to happen in the CNMI is a real dialogue with the government and community about health care. This dialogue wasn't happening while I was there, and I doubt it is happening now. Part of the reason why I didn't more loudly bring it up while I was there was fear: Bringing up problems with the current system sounds like criticism, and I've noticed criticism is often not tolerated by those in power. People who managed to stay on Saipan for years had one bit of universal advice: Keep your head down, don't be noticed. I suspect that many people still feel this way, and that makes an honest public dialogue problematic, but it should happen anyway.

Here are the questions that need to be answered, preferably in public meetings with all of the stakeholders fully participating: How are we going to pay for health care on Saipan? Do we really expect that the indigent are going to be able to afford the rates that we now plan on charging them? Does the 50 percent discount that they get, after a 4000 percent rate increase, really seem that humane? Health care can't be free, but how much can we expect people who don't have refrigerators and who walk to CHC from Kagman to really pay? What can we do to prevent abuse of the system? How about the patients who can afford to pay, have private health insurance but also use Medicaid because they don't want to have a co-pay? Do they understand that not invoking their private insurance helps bankrupt the hospital? What about abuse of the system from powerful people from within? What about native doctors who get paid two salaries at once, retire on the higher income, and then work again for the hospital without even taking overnight call? Can the CNMI really afford a quarter million dollars a year in public funds for this? No wonder we're asking poor folks to

pay \$8,000 for what used to be a \$250 procedure. No wonder the Retirement Fund now says it is in trouble. How else are those who control the purse-strings benefiting from that power? What about abuse from the Northern Islands? How often do we spend thousands of dollars to bring a kid and his mom back from some remote place because we're told the kid is on death's door, and yet he walks happily out of the emergency room half an hour after arrival, sucking a popsicle and just in time to start the fall term of school, just like his emergency evacuation the year before. Maybe the real diagnosis was anticipated seasickness? Can the CNMI keep affording this? And what should we do about it? Remembering the boy who cried wolf, maybe next time the kid will be on death's door. Why aren't the physicians who actually provide the care more involved in decisions about how the money is spent in the hospital? Is it because we would spend the money to make sure that there are reagents in the lab and blood in the blood bank and appropriate supplies? Maybe it is because few doctors stay more than a couple of years and there is a general distrust of people off island who haven't been

around for very long. One might ask, why don't doctors stay? What kind of help can we get from the feds? Every year there are children that die in the CNMI who would have lived if they had the chance to get care at a place with more resources. Dying children evoke sympathy, and maybe a few stories of the realities of practicing medicine in the CNMI along with a plea for help might lead to some more help. Right now Federalization seems limited to fixing problems with CNMI immigration, but wouldn't it be wonderful if the feds would take over CHC? How have we managed to keep Medicare accreditation, and what will happen when we lose it and lose millions of dollars of health care funding because our hospital cannot meet basic important standards? How much money does the CNMI owe to hospitals in Hawaii, California, Japan and the Philippines, and can we ever pay it? How does being a debtor to these referral institutions change our relationship with them when we have critically ill patients who need to be emergently transferred? Should we just let those patients die, because we cannot afford the care? And if we should, is that a physician decision,

an administrator decision, or something that will just happen because of a lack of an accepting hospital, the lack of a way to transfer, and a number of burned bridges? To the point: what should the public policy be when we get a 26 week gestation, 650 gram preemie, who has a good chance at life if she's at a place with more resources, but who will probably cost \$1,000,000 that the CNMI doesn't have? And if it is your personal opinion that we should just let those kids die, would you please be willing to be the one who turns off the ventilator?

Figuring out the funding for health-care in the CNMI is a huge problem, and there is no easy answer. Cleaning up some abuse might help, but it won't fix a system that tries to deliver care that it cannot afford to give. Let's see this desperate move of trying to get more money out of the poor by raising rates by 4000 percent for what it is: a cry for help in a system that is sinking. The whole CNMI needs to wake up and deal with this critically important issue. Lives depend on it.

Joe Livingston, MD, MPH
Albuquerque NM

Agulto's nonsense

The second letter by Mr. Agulto was again just more nonsense. But I am compelled to write back because he is affecting the students in my classroom and they don't like what he has said, especially when he is wrong. I'm really speaking for them because common sense tells me it is hopeless for Mr. Agulto. For a person that has never stepped into my classroom, he has a lot of nerve with no sense of judgment and I really feel sorry for him and the way he is making him-

self look to his people. Ignorance can be excused but there is no excuse for the constant public preaching of nonsense. It would be more forgiving if he was on a corner shouting his nonsense because we could excuse him as having a mental or social problem. He has only served to embarrass his fellow Chamorros and Carolinians because anyone with common sense would never make the nonsense assertions and raise doubts about my classroom if they had never been in my class-

room. FYI, it is nonsense Mr. Agulto when you make assertions about my classroom and then turn around in the next paragraph and admit you "do not know exactly what the teacher does in the classroom." Those are your exact words, Mr. Agulto.

In my 16 years of teaching in the CNMI, Mr. Agulto is the first and only one to challenge or complain about me as a teacher, which I'm sure the indigenous people can see this as nonsense. I don't teach "hip hop" in any shape

or form or fashion and my students, my fellow teachers and my principal could have told Mr. Agulto if he had used his common sense and asked before writing more nonsense. He needs to know that the indigenous people who judge the Teacher of the Year competition have selected me twice as the second best teacher in the Commonwealth but Mr. Agulto must think they were full of nonsense for him to question me as a teacher. The federal government has chosen me twice to function in an

educational capacity in Washington and in Mexico but again I guess Mr. Agulto thinks the feds were also full of nonsense. But I'm sure the indigenous people will exercise their common sense and agree with PSS, their own local judges and the U.S. Department of Education on the quality of my teaching before they agree with the nonsense of Mr. Agulto.

I don't know and I'm sure no one else knows what he was talking about
See AGULTO'S on Page 13

ENTER

From Page 10

know that it's even used for soil erosion control (The fibers entangle well with the ground and prevent topsoil from washing away during storms)?

I particularly like its use to make consumable items like vinegar, tuba, medicine, (it's a more potent and more natural source of electrolytes—say goodbye to high-priced sports drinks which are mostly sugar!

Rotapreneur Gina Rankin makes a noticeably potent virgin coconut oil (I've ordered and used it myself) using a unique, cold-milling process that uses absolutely no fire or heat, which robs the oil of a portion of its nutrients and potency. Gina also uses glass bottles to further maintain the oil's purity and ships worldwide. Email rgrankin@pti-com.com for prices;

But that's not all! Tableware, fashion accessories, furniture, brooms, musical instruments, building material, soap, toothpaste, and even dye (made from the roots of the coconut tree) are all unique coconut-based products just waiting for the adventurous entrepreneur to dive in

with a passion. Check out www.coconut.com for more amazing uses of coconuts.

Tire Sandals plus

I think it was fellow *Saipan Tribune* contributor, Tony Pellegrino, who mentioned this one to me. There are lots of things you can do with old automobile and truck tires. One such idea is to use them make footwear that lasts just about as long as the 50,000 miles the original tires boast!

One webmaster and naturalist has even provided a design plan for such sandals at www.hollowtop.com/sandals.htm (adapted from *Participating in Nature: Thomas J. Elpel's Field Guide to Primitive Living Skills*). Who knows, you might be able to get a patent for your uniquely Saipan Sandal design or manufacturing process and license it to manufacturers worldwide, or set up your own factory here on island! Check out tirecrafting.com for more ideas.

'Home Sweet Container'

I've heard of some creative builders here on Saipan who are building houses from used shipping containers. That's right. In fact, not just here in Mi-

cronesia, but worldwide the trend has even spawned a new field known as "container architecture."

According to an article titled "Innovative architects turn used shipping containers into homes" in the San Francisco Chronicle (www.sfgate.com), out-the-box thinkers of the pre-fab(ricated) home construction trend are taking the use of containers beyond their use (by the military for example) as temporary offices, bunk houses and showers: "*Cheap, strong and easily transportable by boat, truck or train, these big steel structures now litter the ports of America as mementos of our Asian-trade imbalance. (Many more full containers arrive on our shores than depart, so ports either ship them back empty—to the tune of about \$900 per—or sell them.) Hurricane proof, flood proof, fire proof, these metal Lego blocks are tough enough to be stacked 12-high empty—and thus can be used in smaller multistory buildings.*"

The Free Trade Zone Act goes on to summarize the benefits and incentives of operating a business in the designated "free trade" zones:

[Excerpt] In order to entice new eco-

nomic activity, the CNMI must provide tax and other financial incentives similar to those offered by the United States and other countries internationally. To accomplish this, the Legislature finds that it is in the best interest of the people of the Commonwealth to make available for lease public lands at reasonable rates and to provide incentives in the form of tax relief for desirable businesses establishing operations within the free trade zones. [End excerpt]

Ideas like these represent merely the tip of the volcano. There's more fire and heat the deeper you delve into this type of thinking. And who knows what might happen when you combine creativity, entrepreneurial courage, outside-the-box thinking and a free trade zone? For a copy of the entire act, visit www.newsaipan.com/freetradezone.pdf.

Note: We'll explore more excerpts of the Free Trade Zone Act as well as more business ideas in future columns. For more tips on acting on your ideas and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!

■ ■ ■
SaipanLiving Update:
Visit the SaipanLiving.com website

to see our growing list of actual questions being asked by people all over the world who want to know what life on Saipan is really like! Choose one to answer to help with our launch!

With your help, we can create some compelling content, get the site in the top ten, and show the world a broader picture of what life is like in our little piece of paradise, beyond the sensational headlines.

Email me your perspective at questions@saipanliving.com. If you don't have an email account, you can fax it to my attention at 212 658 9232.

■ ■ ■






Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passion-profit.com.

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲82° ▼76°	▲83° ▼76°	▲82° ▼75°	▲82° ▼75°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Sunny	▲86 ▼79
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲86 ▼77
Yap	Mostly Cloudy	▲85 ▼77
Chuuk	Partly Sunny	▲89 ▼78
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲90 ▼79
Kosrae	Mostly Cloudy	▲87 ▼75
Majuro	Showers	▲86 ▼79

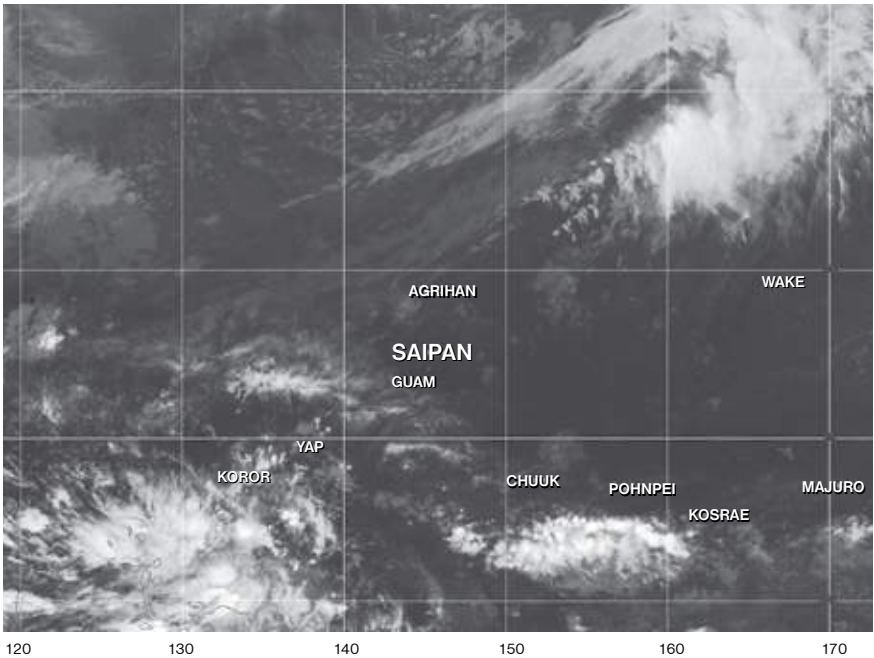
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲68 ▼54
Beijing	Sunny	▲55 ▼34
Hong Kong	Showers	▲75 ▼68
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲79 ▼68
London	Partly Sunny	▲54 ▼39
Los Angeles	Showers	▲62 ▼52
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲93 ▼79
Melbourne	Thunderstorms	▲72 ▼45
Miami	Thundershowers	▲82 ▼71
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲53 ▼39
Osaka	Cloudy	▲59 ▼46
Paris	Cloudy	▲55 ▼41
Pusan	Cloudy	▲60 ▼41
Rome	Cloudy	▲67 ▼49
Salem	Cloudy	▲58 ▼33
San Francisco	Rain	▲61 ▼49
Seoul	Cloudy	▲52 ▼36
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲63 ▼46
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	▲59 ▼39

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
05:38AM Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
11:19AM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet
04:17PM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
11:18PM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, APRIL 1, 2008

Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front extends from 25N155E to 16N131E and continues beyond 15N130E as a shear line. Scattered showers are found along and up to 220 miles northwest of the cold front. A near-equatorial trough runs from 2N130E to a circulation centered near 3N135E to EQ146E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are found between the equator and 7N from 130E to 139E. Trade-wind convergence southeast of Guam and south of Chuuk and Pohnpei is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms up to 250 miles south of a line from 5N147E to 5N162E. A surface trough and upper level divergence south of Majuro is producing scattered showers within 100 miles of a line from 2N165E to 3N175E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:12AM	6:30PM
Thursday	6:11AM	6:30PM
Friday	6:10AM	6:30PM
Saturday	6:10AM	6:30PM
Sunday	6:09AM	6:30PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	3:05AM	2:51PM
Thursday	3:46AM	3:45PM
Friday	4:27AM	4:40PM
Saturday	5:07AM	5:36PM
Sunday	5:49AM	6:35PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

the name of contact person, and a phone number.

- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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 - Fax: (670) 235-3740
 - Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 27, 2008

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
Saipan-Rota CO 9313 8:30am 9:05am 3,4,7	Rota-Saipan CO 9598 11:10am 11:45am 1,2,6
Saipan-Guam CO9317 4:00am 4:50am Daily CO9597 8:30am 9:20am 1,2,5,6 CO9313 8:30am 10:00am 3,4,7 via Rota CO9601 12:30pm 1:20pm Daily CO9603 3:30pm 4:20pm Daily CO9605 6:30pm 7:20pm Daily CO9599 9:30pm 10:20pm Daily	Guam-Saipan CO 9316 2:30am 3:20am Daily CO9596 7:00am 7:50am Daily CO9598 10:15am 11:45am 1,2,6 via Rota CO9600 10:45am 11:35am 3,4,5,7 CO9602 2:00pm 2:50pm Daily CO9604 5:00pm 5:50pm Daily CO9606 8:00pm 8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita NW 078 8:25am 1:30pm Daily via Nagoya NW 075 4:50pm 7:30pm Daily	Narita-Saipan NW 076 10:35am 3:05pm Daily NW 077 6:15pm 1:10am+1 Daily via Nagoya
Saipan-Osaka NW 083 4:20pm 7:10pm Daily	Osaka-Saipan NW 084 10:30am 3:05pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya NW 078 8:40am 11:25am Daily	Nagoya-Saipan NW 077 9:00pm 1:25am+1 Daily
Saipan-Manila CO 895 4:45pm 6:35pm 6 CO 895 6:45pm 8:35pm 3	Manila-Saipan CO 890 9:15am 2:55pm 6 CO 890 11:45am 5:35pm 3
Saipan-Seoul OZ 604 2:10am 6:00am 1 OZ 604 2:40am 6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7 OZ 606 3:30pm 7:00pm 2,4,6,7	Seoul-Saipan OZ 605 9:00am 2:30pm 2,4,6,7 OZ 603 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ 603 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan OZ 608 4:00am 7:35am 1,4,5,7	Busan-Saipan OZ 607 9:30pm 2:50am+1 3,4,6,7
Guam-Manila CO 891 6:00am 10:30am 3 via Yap and Koror CO 893 6:30am 8:05am 6 CO 893 8:25am 10:00am 2,7 CO 893 5:50pm 9:10pm 5 via Koror CO 933 7:00pm 8:40pm Daily PR 111 6:00am 7:45am 1,2,4,6,7	Manila-Guam CO 894 11:20am 4:55pm 2,7 CO 894 7:45pm 1:20am+1 6 CO 892 9:45pm 6:30am+1 3 via Koror and Yap CO 892 10:10pm 5:30am+1 5 via Koror CO 934 10:55pm 4:30am+1 Daily PR 110 10:15pm 4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Guam-Hongkong CO 909 6:50pm 9:35pm 1,5	Hongkong-Guam CO 910 10:35pm 5:15am+1 1,5
Guam-Rota CO 9598 10:15am 10:45am 1,2,6	Rota-Guam CO 9313 9:30am 10:00am 3,4,7

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily
Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123*	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125*	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Letters to the Editor

A call to action

Real leaders are ordinary people with extraordinary determination.—Unknown

Dear leaders of the Commonwealth:

With all of the problems plaguing the CNMI today, I am urging all of you to put aside political differences and work together to come up with some real solutions to our problems. It does not matter what political party you belong to or what faction you are siding with. For the sake of our people, please shake hands, exchange hugs, and come together to save our sinking ship.

Since you seem to be running in circles, I offer some simple solutions to a few of the CNMI's most critical issues. The best thing about my advice is it is free, and you can take it or leave it. While are current problems are grave, I firmly believe you all have the talent and ability to solve our problems if you all can just work together. Remember, poor planning and bad decision-making got us into this quagmire. Proper planning and honest, educated decisions by our leaders will get us out.

Please consider the following solutions to our problems:

COMMONWEALTH UTILITIES CORPORATION

Problem: Old, outmoded diesel engines; power distribution problems; management problems; political interference.

Solution: Privatize management of CUC before privatizing its diesel engines or power distribution system.

Yes, this sounds crazy. But I want you to think about a newly built hotel. Do the owners manage the hotel? Not if they want to be successful and profitable. Owners hire a hotel management team such as Hyatt, Hilton, Westin, or some other reliable, reputable firm. With the right private management team in charge of CUC, we will see immediate results-no more political hires or influence, and certainly no more "special" customers who can rack up a \$600,000 CUC debt all the while poor masses get their power cut the instant they are late.

While this idea may seem outrageous, I want you to imagine, just for a few minutes, what Pacific Islands Club or the Hyatt Regency Saipan would be like if it were run by our government. What are some of the potential problems that could arise? How about nepotism, bogus fact-finding missions to exotic destinations, outrageous management and board salaries, poor customer service, unreliable power and water, long lunches, tardiness, and excessive absences, just to name a few? Certainly, inefficiency would lead to bankruptcy, and the hotels would end up being closed in no time.

Make no mistake about it. This can happen, but there must be fairness and transparency. And anyone caught tampering or trying to influence the bidding process should be given a "GO TO JAIL" card.

ROLLING BLACKOUTS AND SURPRISE POWER OUTAGES

Problem: Expensive fuel and a broke government; surprise power outages that wreak havoc on our appliances and electronic equipment; excessive power consumption by

our government.

Solution: Raise rates to cover cost of fuel; end surprise power outages by implementing a power outage schedule and ACTUALLY FOLLOWING IT; suspend or fire all government personnel who do not follow a strict government power conservation policy.

Let's face it. We cannot expect anymore free rides from our broke government. The government cannot subsidize electricity. Fuel is expensive, and we need to pay the fuel costs. Maybe I'm an idiot, but why can't the Governor, the House, and the Senate get together and work on ending the rolling black outs? Spend one day together working on viable solutions! At the end of the day, here are a few ideas I hope they would come up with:

A rolling black out schedule that is actually followed and adhered to so that everyone in the CNMI can unplug their appliances and computers and prepare for that special break time. Meetings at offices and work hours are scheduled around those outages. Productivity is improved, while electronics and appliances are saved. Yes, it is that simple!

An answering system for CUC's trouble desk! All hotels and dozens of public and private agencies have an answering system. What exactly is stopping CUC from following suit? As of right now, most of us don't even bother to call trouble desk because all we get is a busy signal! Install an answering system and update messages that will announce emergency power outages or failures in the affected areas so that consumers can effectively plan and prepare!

Implement strict policies on power conservation for all government agencies and personnel. Anyone caught leaving lights on during the day or air-conditioners on during non-working hours will be suspended or eventually fired for not complying. I am tired of seeing lights left on in the day and air conditioners left on at night and weekends at government agencies! That is a slap in the face to everyone who does their best to conserve power.

Implement tax breaks and incentives for anyone who is using alternative energy.

Come up with a powerful media and educational campaign to promote energy conservation for all residents and businesses.

COMMONWEALTH HEALTH CENTER

Problem: Astronomical receivables and debt caused by "free" health care; management problems; \$8,000 circumcisions.

Solution: Privatize all outpatient services. Have CHC concentrate on inpatient care and treatment, as well as emergency care.

Yes, privatization again! In case you didn't know this, CHC is owed millions by people who walk in with the flu and walk out without any payment. When it comes time to collect, they have moved or left island and cannot be located.

The bottom line is, CHC should not be burdened by outpatient care. We have outstanding private clinics and phenomenal private doctors, such as Dr. Ada, Dr. Alou, and Dr. Stearns. Their clinics can and should be handling non-emergency care. What does this mean? That you can

no longer walk in to CHC without paying your tab. But what do we do with low-income families who cannot afford health insurance? The answer is Medicaid. Medicaid is the United States health program for individuals and families with low incomes and resources. Our locals who are not working and cannot afford health insurance should sign up for Medicaid. As far as any guest worker who gets treated at CHC, it should be the responsibility of the employer to either provide some type of health insurance or be prepared to pay the medical costs. The end result is CHC will finally have the resources to concentrate on the most urgent needs of our people-inpatient and emergency room care!

As far as that \$8,000 circumcision that was headlined in the newspaper recently? Hello, that was elective surgery! Was the boy going to die if he didn't get a circumcision? Did the mother ever use that brain of hers to think about getting a price quotation or written estimate done right before the surgery? Did anyone realize that it involved an anesthesiologist, a surgeon, nurses, and over an hour in the operating room? Circumcisions are more a cultural or cosmetic thing and it is not a priority! If the mother leaves island without paying the money owed to CHC, who eats the cost? WE DO, THE TAXPAYERS, ONCE AGAIN! Enough!

ARTICLE XII AND LAND VALUE

Problem: Land depreciation; land ownership issues.

Solution: Possible amendments and not abolishment!

I listed Article XII to ensure that our leaders use extreme caution and heed from any talk of abolishing it. Amendments are understandable, but Article XII should not be abolished.

I am not of Northern Marianas descent, or an NMD. Obviously, neither are my parents. When we moved here 34 years ago, my parents knew they could not own land. Did it stop them from leasing land? No. Did it stop them from building a house? No. While my parents lived in the Philippines, Hawaii, Palau, and American Samoa, they fell in love with Saipan's beauty and forged friendships and ties with some of the warmest, most loving people you could ever hope to find in a lifetime. My parents raised us to always respect local traditions, to embrace indigenous cultures, and to learn from them. My family and I support the intent of Article XII and believe it should never be abolished, as land alienation laws exist throughout the world. Land alienation laws are set up for a reason: to ensure that the indigenous people do not become a minority in their own home. I am confident all native Hawaiians wish they had an Article XII in place.

Possible amendments to Article XII that I might agree to include reducing the indigenous bloodline requirement from 25 percent to 15 percent, or extending leases from 55 years to 75 years, or something that is somewhat reasonable. On another note, I have respect for Ricky Delgado, the President of PTI, but I am somewhat dismayed that he continually pushes for the abolishment of Article XII. Does he not realize that the Philippines also has land alienation laws? Mr. Delgado, I am half-Filipino, yet I cannot go to the Philippines and purchase land because I am a U.S citizen. The

Philippines, like most places in the world, set up land alienation laws to protect its people. Why can't the CNMI NMDs do the same?

My wife is Chamorro, and my children are NMDs. While they will be given property when they turn 18, I still want them to be able to purchase land at reasonable rates. If local land rates skyrocketed to Hawaii rates, could any middle class families here afford to purchase land? Worse yet, what about our local low-income families? I do not want the CNMI to be turned into a Hawaii or Singapore. I love the tranquility of our islands. I hope it to stay that way. But more importantly, I believe our NMDs want it to stay that way.

Because I don't want to turn this letter into a novel, I have only listed a few problems that require urgent attention. Leaders, our future lies in your hands. We need real leaders capable of making real decisions right now. Many of you have been given the privilege to lead us, but how many of you have the ability to inspire us? My dear leaders, you need to search deep inside your hearts and minds and awaken your God-given abilities to move mountains. I do not buy in to the notion that all of you are tainted or corrupt. But I do believe that many of you are often pressured to compromise your principles in order to get things done. This needs to stop. Please, for the sake of everyone living here in the CNMI, move mountains. Go against the grain. Fight for what is right. Inspire us!

I am sincere in everything I say and hope this letter serves as a call to action. If not, it is only my words and time wasted, but at least it didn't cost our taxpayers anything.

Leaders, may God bless you and give you the strength to do what is right, and the courage to refrain from doing what is wrong. And please know I will continue to hold candlelight vigils for you at my house during our frequent, unannounced black outs. Please feel free to join me anytime.

Ed Propst
Dandan, Saipan

Con-con? Not!

This is in response to the suggestion being made that since so many constitutional initiatives are being proposed, might as well call for a constitutional convention.

In the first place, not every initiative merits being put on the ballot. If the Legislature does its job well, far fewer will emerge as eligible for a vote by the public.

In the second place, opting for a con-con will delay things considerably—unless the initiatives are put on the same ballot—and that doesn't make sense either. Some of the initiatives are calling for ways to address power woes, retirement woes, economic woes, and the sooner they are voted on, the better.

In the third place, a comprehensive change to the Constitution was proposed last time round, and it got nowhere. There's no point in going through that exercise again.

Ruth L. Tighe
Tanapag, Saipan

AGULTO'S

From Page 11

in reference to my agenda and he certainly didn't say what my agenda was because there isn't one, so I won't even waste my time trying to make sense of his nonsense. I was glad to see he does recognize some of the positive things about the hip-hop culture. But I really have sympathy for Mr. Agulto because he really needs help *bad*. Like a child, he is totally confused about what is

going on in my class and what he is talking about. He really needs to get educated about my classes if he is so concerned or take the nonsense somewhere else and stop offending students and the many indigenous people that truly appreciate me and my efforts.

FYI, Mr. Agulto, my children are Chamorro and, as their father, I have just as much vested interest in the CNMI as any indigenous person and I love the CNMI just as much as you do. Mr. Agulto just doesn't like the fact that I'm not local and he doesn't want

to respect the fact that I have a vested interest in the CNMI equal to any indigenous person with children and I let it be known. I'm an advocate for the preservation of the indigenous cultures and I'm an advocate for the church but Mr. Agulto still continues with his nonsense based on *nothing*.

He is worried because I'm a good and well-known teacher who is teaching the core principles and values of America and there are clearly many conflicts with these values and principles in the CNMI starting

with "equality." I know he's worried because he doesn't want things like equality for everyone in the CNMI and he even wants only Chamorros and Carolinians living in the CNMI. I'm sure he doesn't realize how insulting he was to every race of people in the CNMI, especially the Chamorros and Carolinians with relatives who are not indigenous. He just lost a lot of friends and made even more enemies with his nonsense.

Mr. Agulto only wants "his perspective" taught in school and whatever

that is will surely be driven by bias and prejudice. He obviously doesn't know that publishing companies don't put nonsense in the textbook for us to teach. He writes like the only people in the future of the CNMI are local people, which is more nonsense that speaks volumes about the real problem Mr. Agulto has within himself and not with me—we call it nonsense and he is full of it.

Ambrose Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

Business

HUD chief resigns amid criminal probe

WASHINGTON (AP)—HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson, his tenure tarnished by allegations of political favoritism and a criminal investigation, announced his resignation Monday amid the wreckage of the national housing crisis.

He leaves behind a trail of unanswered questions about whether he tilted the Department of Housing

and Urban Development toward Republican contractors and cronies.

In announcing that his last day at HUD will be April 18, Jackson said only, "There comes a time when one must attend more diligently to personal and family matters."

In October, the National Journal first reported on the criminal inves-



Jackson

tigation of Jackson. The FBI has been examining the ties between Jackson and a friend who was paid \$392,000 by Jackson's department as a construction manager in New Orleans. Jackson's friend got the job after Jackson asked a staff member to pass along his name to the Housing Authority of New Orleans.

In another instance of alleged

favoritism that came to light in February, the Philadelphia housing authority alleges that Jackson retaliated against the agency because it refused to award a vacant lot worth \$2 million to soul-music producer-turned-community developer Kenny Gamble for redevelopment of a public housing complex.

Oil prices slide, retail gas hits record

NEW YORK (AP)—Gas prices at the pump surged to a new record over the weekend, while crude oil accelerated its slide Monday amid a broad-based commodities sell-off.

The average price for a gallon of regular unleaded rose to \$3.287, according to AAA and the Oil Price Information Service. That's two-tenths of a penny higher than a record set earlier in March. Prices were highest in Hawaii and California, where the average price topped \$3.60 a gallon.

Last year, prices peaked in May before backtracking; with gasoline already at a record it will like only continue its advance. The price of crude oil, the main ingredient in gasoline, is also much higher than it was when gas prices spiked a year ago.

On Monday, light, sweet crude for May delivery dropped \$4.04 to settle at \$101.58 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange, adding to a decline of nearly \$2 a barrel on Friday. Even so, prices finished the first three months of the year 5.8 percent higher than where they started; crude set a record of \$111.80 in March before giving up ground.

Revamp proposed for US financial regulators

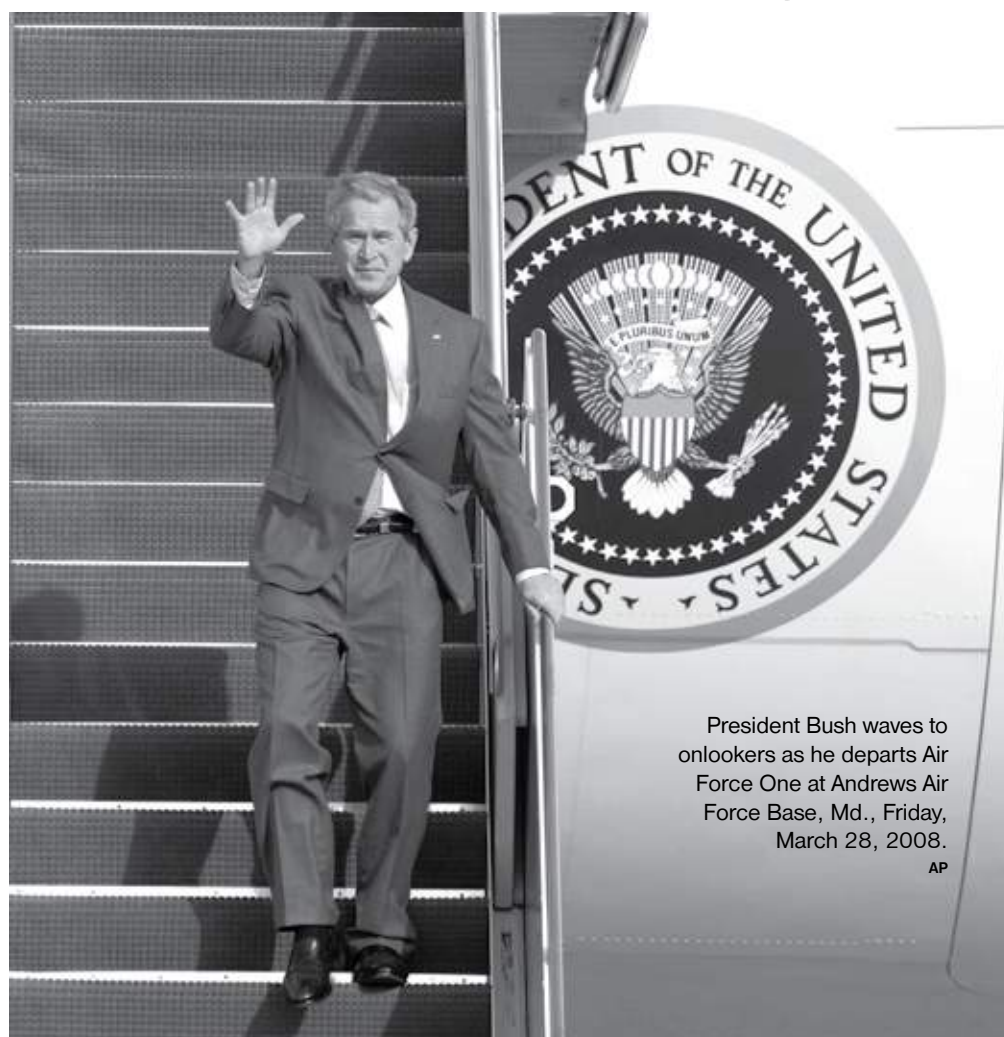
WASHINGTON (AP)—It's a Herculean task: revamping a financial regulatory system dating back to the Civil War to deal with 21st century crises imperiling the country.

Under an ambitious Bush administration plan, the Federal Reserve would take on the unwieldy role of uber cop in charge of financial market stability. Other regulatory agencies could see their influence diminished.

The proposal won't fix the host of economic and financial problems that threatens to plunge the United States into a deep recession, but it might help guard against future troubles. It would take years and a lot of political wrangling—in Congress, on Wall Street, in statehouses and elsewhere—to implement all the changes envisioned.

Yet, the initiative, formally announced Monday, casts a fresh spotlight on the best way to protect the country from financial catastrophes in an intricate web of complex, often-changing financial products and the wide array of financial players using them in the United States and beyond. That debate probably will take center stage in the next president's administration.

Asked if President Bush's goal was to get the revamp approved before he leaves office,



President Bush waves to onlookers as he departs Air Force One at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., Friday, March 28, 2008.
AP

press secretary Dana Perino acknowledged the enormity of the plan. "We'll have to see. It is a big attempt," she said.

Democrats in Congress said the administration should be

focusing its efforts on easing the country's current woes, including providing more relief for millions of distressed homeowners clobbered by the housing collapse and credit

crunch. Foreclosures have hit record highs.

"We must take steps now to provide help to families who are hurting," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Citi splits consumer banking, card units

NEW YORK (AP)—Citigroup named a veteran retail banker Monday to head its North American consumer banking unit, splitting it off from its credit-card business as Citi struggles to become profitable again after suffering its biggest quarterly loss in its 196-year history. The latest move is the biggest sign yet that CEO Vikram Pandit, appointed in December, wants to fix Citi's major parts rather than sell them off to raise cash—at least for now. It also addresses shareholder concerns over what steps Pandit would take to attract more consumers to Citi's retail banking unit.

Lehman Brothers sues Marubeni in Japan

TOKYO (AP)—The U.S. investment banking company Lehman Brothers sued the Japanese trading company Marubeni on Monday, seeking to recover \$350 million in financing it says was obtained fraud-

ulently. Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. says employees of Marubeni Corp. helped arrange the funding for a since-failed unit of a Japanese health care company. Marubeni Corp. has repeatedly denied wrongdoing as published reports surfaced about the alleged fraud. It said it has not yet seen the lawsuit and could not comment. It reiterated it has no obligation to repay the money. Both Lehman and Marubeni say they are cooperating fully with an investigation by the Japanese police.

Less corn could mean higher food prices

WASHINGTON (AP)—From chicken nuggets to corn flakes, food prices at grocery stores and dinner tables could be headed even higher as farmers cut back on the land they're planting in corn this spring. Corn prices already are high, and a drop in supply should keep them rising. Combine that with the huge demand for corn-based ethanol fuel—and higher energy costs for transporting food—and consumers are

likely to see their food bills going up and up. Farmers are now expected to plant 86 million acres of corn this year, the Department of Agriculture predicted Monday, down 8 percent from last year, which was the highest since World War II.

Stocks gain on last day of quarter

NEW YORK (AP)—Wall Street managed a moderate gain in the final session of a dismal first quarter Monday, but stock prices and the major indexes still ended the first three months of 2008 with massive losses, the casualties of the still continuing credit crisis. The Standard & Poor's 500 index, the benchmark for many widely held investments such as mutual funds, suffered a loss for the quarter of nearly 10 percent. On the last day of the quarter, the Dow Jones industrial average rose 46.49, or 0.38 percent, to 12,262.89. Broader stock indicators also rose. The S&P 500 index advanced 7.48, or 0.57 percent, to 1,322.70, and

the Nasdaq composite index rose 17.92, or 0.79 percent, to 2,279.10.

Pernod Ricard buys maker of Absolut

STOCKHOLM, Sweden (AP)—Spirits group Pernod Ricard SA is adding Swedish flavor to a liquor cabinet stacked with Scotch whisky, French champagne and Cuban rum with its \$8.34 billion purchase of the state-owned maker of Absolut vodka. The company said Monday it was delighted to add the premium vodka brand to its assortment of drinks, after the Swedish government accepted its bid for Absolut's parent company, Vin & Sprit. "It is a unique acquisition," Pernod Ricard Managing Director Pierre Pringuet said. "I would describe it as a big bang." Sweden said it selected the Pernod Ricard bid on Sunday over three other offers, by U.S.-based Fortune Brands Inc., Bermuda-based Bacardi Ltd. and an investment group controlled by Sweden's Wallenberg family.

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

	AUSTRALIA 5,419.60 Up 9.90 (+0.18%)
	HONG KONG 23,195.31 Up 346.11 (+1.51%)
	JAKARTA 2,416.23 Down 31.07 (-1.27%)
	TOKYO 12,771.66 Up 246.12 (+1.96%)
	K. LUMPUR 1,247.57 Up 0.05 (0.00%)
	MANILA 2,960.02 Down 24.65 (-0.83%)
	SINGAPORE 3,030.37 Up 23.01 (+0.77%)
	SEOUL 1,710.36 Up 6.37 (+0.37%)
	BANGKOK 589.26 Up 1.65 (+0.28%)

LEADING INDICATORS

	DOW 12,262.89 +0.38%
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	NASDAQ 2,279.10 +0.79%
--	-------------------------------------

	S&P 1,322.70 +0.57%
--	--------------------------------------

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.0975
British Pound	0.5042
Canadian Dollar	1.0221
Chinese Renmbi	7.0136
Euro	0.6338
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7849
Indian Rupee	40.11
Indonesian Rupiah	9,203.5
Japanese Yen	99.899
Malaysian Ringgit	3.1805
New Zealand Dollar	1.2716
Philippine Peso	41.65
Singapore Dollar	1.378
South Korean Won	984.1
Swiss Franc	0.9945
Taiwan Dollar	30.307
Thailand Baht	31.455

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

Nation

Clinton says Obama wants to stop votes

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP)—Democratic Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton accused rival Sen. Barack Obama and his allies of trying to stop people from voting as some of his backers have called on her to drop out of the presidential race.

The Obama campaign rejected the charge, dismissing Clinton's criticism as "completely laughable."

In a series of television interviews in states holding upcoming contests, Clinton vowed to press on with her campaign and suggested Obama and his supporters wanted to keep those states from playing a role in selecting the party's presidential nominee.

"My take on it is a lot of Senator Obama's supporters want to end this race because they don't want

people to keep voting," she told CBS affiliate KTVQ in Billings, Mont. "That's just the opposite of what I believe. We want people to vote. I want the people of Montana to vote, don't you?"

Montana holds its primary June 3. The New York senator made similar comments in interviews with stations in Indiana and North Carolina, which hold primaries May 6.

Obama leads the overall race for the Democratic nomination with 1,631 delegates, including separately chosen party and elected officials known as superdelegates. He got the backing



Clinton

of Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar on Monday. Clinton has 1,501, according to the latest AP tally.

Clinton almost certainly will end the primary season narrowly trailing Obama in the popular vote and among pledged delegates unless the nullified primaries in Florida and Michigan are counted—an unlikely scenario at best. But Obama is unlikely to end the race with the 2,024 pledged delegates needed to win outright either, meaning the nominee will be determined by roughly 800 superdelegates.

Responding to Clinton, Obama

spokesman Bill Burton said: "That is completely laughable from a campaign that thought the race would be over on February 5. We have encouraged our supporters to do no such thing and Senator Obama was very clear he supports her carrying on in this race."

Campaigning in Pennsylvania, Obama called the continuing primary battle "a struggle" but said he believed it was a good process that would strengthen the party in the long run.

"It is a healthy thing that so many people are passionate," Obama said in Johnstown. "I think it is great that Senator Clinton's supporters are as passionate about her as my supporters are about me... I think that is making this historic race that much more compelling."

SC island mystery deepens with suicide

HILTON HEAD ISLAND, S.C. (AP)—Days after police searched his home for clues to the disappearance of two of his wealthy clients, accountant Dennis Ray Gerwing locked himself in a villa, climbed into a bathtub lined with a comforter and pillow, slashed his neck and legs with a steak knife, and bled to death.

Gerwing left two suicide notes, one scrawled on a bedsheet, the other on paper. In one of them, according to an unidentified law enforcement source cited by The (Columbia) State newspaper, he admitted skimming money from the missing clients, John and Elizabeth Calvert.

But if he knew anything about the couple's fate, Gerwing apparently took that secret to the grave.

It's a mystery that for almost a month has engulfed this island of oak-shaded homes, guarded subdivision entrances and lush golf courses.

Larry Naylor, who docks his

boat next to the Calverts, said he knows the chances of finding them alive are fading.

"People don't know what to think," Naylor said. "It's a very strange event."

The Calverts manage a marina and 125 rental units on this upscale resort island and live part-time on a yacht here. For two years, Gerwing's firm, The Club Group, had been keeping the books for the Calverts' business holdings on Hilton Head.

But the Calverts decided in December to take their business away from the firm and manage it themselves. Gerwing, the firm's chief financial officer, was working out the details when the couple vanished March 3.

Police said Gerwing was the last person to see the couple together, and they searched his home here, leaving it so torn apart that he chose to stay in one of the apartments managed by his company. Three days later, the 54-year-old accountant committed suicide there.



AP
In this July 2006 photo provided by Hilton Head Monthly Magazine, John and Elizabeth Calvert are seen as part of a story about their leasing of marina space on Hilton Head Island, S.C.

Bills linked to DB Cooper up for auction

DALLAS (AP)—A boy who found the lone piece of evidence linked to the world's only unsolved skyjacking is now a 30-something father of five who has decided to start selling his treasure.

Brian Ingram was an 8-year-old on a family camping trip when he discovered three bundles of deteriorating \$20 bills on the shore of the Columbia River near Portland, Ore., in 1980. The money turned out to be some of the \$200,000 ransom D.B. Cooper was carrying when he parachuted from a plane after a 1971 hijacking.

Now Ingram's taking some of his find to auction, offering 15 bills through Dallas-based Heritage Auction Galleries. The live and online auction was announced Monday and scheduled for June 13-14.

"My wife and I have dis-

cussed it over a few years, and we just decided we wanted to share it with people," said Ingram, 36, of Mena, Ark.

The auction announcement comes after the recent discovery

of a tattered, half-buried parachute in the area where Cooper was believed to have landed. The FBI is investigating whether it was one given to Cooper.

In November 1971, a man

identifying himself as Dan Cooper, later mistakenly called D.B. Cooper, hijacked a Northwest Orient flight from Portland to Seattle, claiming he had a bomb.

At Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, he released the passengers in exchange for \$200,000 and four parachutes and asked to be flown to Mexico. He jumped from the plane somewhere near the Oregon state line.

There was no trace of Cooper until Ingram came upon the \$5,880 while brushing his hand over the sand, trying to clear a spot for a campfire. The FBI matched the serial numbers and kept 13 bills in case it ever prosecutes the Cooper case. The Ingrams also had to give some bills to an insurance company that paid the ransom.



AP
Brian Ingram displays one of the \$20 bills that skyjacker D.B. Cooper had when he parachuted from a plane with his ransom 37 years ago and is headed for auction in Dallas, Monday, March 31, 2008.

ACROSS THE NATION

Chelsea Clinton criticizes Bush in N.C.

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP)—Chelsea Clinton returned Monday to North Carolina, telling college students that the world will "breathe a sigh of relief" once President Bush leaves office. Clinton spoke Monday during a town hall meeting with students at North Carolina State University. She later moved on to Peace College in Raleigh to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Clinton told about 250 people at N.C. State that her mother, New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, would work to repair the nation's reputation abroad. "I think the world will breathe a sigh of relief when this president is gone," Clinton said, criticizing Bush for pulling out of various accordings, including the Kyoto Protocol on global warming.

Family pursues MySpace sex assault suit

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—The family of a teenage girl who says she was sexually assaulted by a 19-year-old man she met on MySpace.com asked a federal appeals court Monday to revive their lawsuit against the social networking Web site. A federal judge in Austin, Texas, dismissed the \$30 million suit in February 2007, rejecting the family's claim that MySpace has a legal duty to protect its young users from sexual predators. U.S. District Judge Sam Sparks also ruled that interactive computer services like MySpace are immune from such lawsuits under the Communications Decency Act of 1996. The girl's family asked the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans to overturn Sparks' rulings.

Iraqi's tip helped lead to remains

CINCINNATI (AP)—A tip from an Iraqi helped the U.S. military find the remains of an Ohio soldier captured in an ambush and then shown on Arab television surrounded by armed masked men nearly four years ago, an Army official said Monday. The parents of Staff Sgt. Keith Matthew Maupin, who lobbied at the Pentagon and even met with President Bush about their missing son, were told Sunday of the discovery. The military had received tips through the years from several sources as authorities continued their search for Maupin. "This last one proved to be the most accurate as we kept getting closer and closer," said Maj. Mark Cheadle, a spokesman for the Baghdad area command. The tip was first reported by the Dayton Daily News.

Al Gore announces anti-warming effort

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP)—Former Vice President Al Gore launched a three-year, multimillion-dollar advocacy campaign Monday calling for the U.S. to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions.

The Alliance for Climate Protection's campaign, dubbed "we," will combine advertising, online organizing and partnerships with grassroots groups to educate the public about global warming and urge solutions from elected officials.

"We're trying to get a movement happening to switch public opinion so that our leaders feel, 'Wow! We really need to make this a top priority issue,'" Alliance CEO Cathy Zoi told The Associated Press.

An advertising campaign will equate the climate-change movement with other grand historic endeavors, like stopping fascism in Europe during World War II, overcoming segregation in the United States and putting the first man on the moon.

Some advertisements will feature bipartisan pairs, such as the Rev. Al Sharpton with Pat Robertson and Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi with former GOP Speaker Newt Gingrich, Zoi said.

Robertson spoke Monday on "The 700 Club," his long-running Christian news and talk show, about his involvement,

saying he was honored to be asked by Gore to participate.

"It's just common sense that we ought to be good stewards of the environment and do everything within our power to protect this fragile planet that we all live on," he said.

Gingrich spokesman Rick Tyler said the former congressman is participating because he agrees on the need for a bipartisan approach to climate change. In Gingrich's new book, "A Contract with the Earth," he argues that conservatives are natural environmentalists.

The Alliance will initially spend \$300 million over three years, although Zoi said more could be spent in the future.

Some of the money for the campaign comes from Gore himself. Zoi said he contributed his personal profits from the book and movie "An Inconvenient Truth," a \$750,000 award from his share of the Nobel Peace Prize and a personal matching gift. She declined to provide the total amount.

"When politicians hear the American people calling loud and clear for change, they'll listen," Gore, the former Tennessee senator and 2000 presidential candidate, said in a statement. Gore's staff did not respond to calls seeking further comment.

Asia

Olympic torch rekindled in Beijing

BEIJING (AP)—The elaborate ceremony to rekindle the Olympic torch went off without a hitch Monday in closely guarded Tiananmen Square—with hundreds of cheering women in brightly colored T-shirts, flower-toting children and confetti.

There were no protests in Beijing, although some are expected during the 85,000-mile world tour.

■ ■ ■

BEIJING (AP)—Suspects accused of setting fire to shops in Tibet, causing the deaths of 12 people during anti-government violence, have been taken into custody, state media said Monday.

The suspects were responsible for deadly arson attacks on three shops in Lhasa—including a clothing outlet where five young women were burned to death—and one in nearby Dagze county, the Tibet Daily newspaper said.

■ ■ ■

NEW DELHI (AP) — An official says the captain of India's soccer team has refused to carry the Olympic torch during its relay through the Indian capital later this month to protest Chinese authorities' crackdown on recent protests in Tibet.

■ ■ ■

Demonstrations are expected as the torch goes to London, Paris and San Francisco. Even stops in Kazakhstan on Wednesday and Turkey on Thursday could be



AP

Chinese hurdler Liu Xiang holds the Olympic Torch during the Olympic torch lighting ceremony, Monday, March 31, 2008, at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China.

flash points for China's Muslim Uighur minority living abroad.

President Hu Jintao presided at the elaborate ceremony in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, where the flame—carried from Greece in a lantern aboard an Air China flight—reignited the Olympic torch.

The ceremony, filled with political jargon, multicolored balloons

and confetti, was broadcast on state television 130 days before the games open. It was meant to display a confident China ready to use the Olympics to show off its growing economic and political clout. About 5,000 people attended the invitation-only event. Hundreds of seats were vacant, save for dozens of plainclothes security agents in black jackets.

'Aquino responding to cancer treatment'

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Former Philippine president and democracy icon Corazon Aquino has responded well to her first week of chemotherapy after she was diagnosed with colon cancer, her family said in comments published Tuesday.

"Her appetite is better and she is not as weak as the first few days of her chemotherapy," daughter Pinky Aquino Abellada told the Philippine Star daily, adding that her mother had not let out "a word of complaint."

Aquino's family announced last week that the 75-year-old stateswoman was battling colon

cancer, prompting Roman Catholic leaders to mobilize nationwide prayers for her recovery. Bishop Florentino Cinese of Tarlac province, where Aquino is from, said he organized a mobile phone "text message brigade" to reach as many people as possible.

"She has no nausea or anything," said another daughter, Viel Aquino-Dee, adding that chemotherapy sessions were expected to go on for weeks or months. She said her mother had improved in recent days, but was "very tired and has difficulty speaking."

New Pakistan Cabinet sworn in

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan (AP)—President Pervez Musharraf on Monday swore in a new Pakistani Cabinet made up of political opponents who have pledged to reduce the U.S.-backed leader's once-sweeping powers.

Twenty-four ministers took the oath from Musharraf during a low-key ceremony in the capital that was snubbed by leaders of the country's new ruling parties. Some of the ministers were jailed after Musharraf seized

power in a 1999 military coup.

"Thank you and congratulations," a stony faced Musharraf said after the ministers followed him in repeating the oath of allegiance.

Last Tuesday, Musharraf swore in Yousaf Raza Gilani, a loyalist of slain ex-leader Benazir Bhutto.

The incoming four-party coalition needed another week to finalize its initial Cabinet lineup and is expected to add dozens more names in the coming weeks.

World

Mugabe foes claim win amid slow tally

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP)—Zimbabwe's opposition claimed victory Monday in the elections, while a slow trickle in official results raised fears that supporters of long-time President Robert Mugabe were rigging the count.

Mugabe has been accused of stealing previous elections, but that was before Zimbabwe's once thriving farm economy nearly collapsed and before leading members of the ruling party openly defied him.

Independent observers said trends supported the main opposition party's contention that it was leading in the presidential race, but the monitors said the edge would not be enough to avoid a runoff.

"We have won an election. Mugabe's victory is not possible given the true facts," Tendai Biti, secretary-general of the opposition Movement for Democratic Change, told reporters.

Truce calms down Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—Rockets fell on the Green Zone and random machine gun fire rang out Monday in the southern city of Basra as Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr sought to rein in his militia after a week of battles that claimed about 400 lives.

The peace deal between al-Sadr and Iraqi government forces—said to have been brokered in Iran—calmed the violence but left the cleric's Mahdi Army intact and Iraq's U.S.-backed prime minister politically battered and humbled within his own Shiite power base.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki had promised to crush

the militias that have effectively ruled Basra for nearly three years. The U.S. military launched air strikes in the city to back the Iraqi effort.

But the ferocious response by the Mahdi Army, including rocket fire on the U.S.-controlled Green Zone and attacks throughout the Shiite south, caught the government by surprise and sent officials scrambling for a way out of the crisis.

The confrontation enabled al-Sadr to show that he remains a powerful force capable of challenging the Iraqi government, the Americans and mainstream Shiite parties that have sought for years to marginalize him.

2 tied to killing of Russian reporter

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan (AP)—Officials said Monday that two men from Tajikistan have admitted robbing and killing a Russian TV journalist, a death that had bolstered Russia's image as one of the most dangerous countries for reporters.

Ilyas Shurpayev, 32, a reporter for Russia's state-

run TV network Channel One, was found dead March 21 in his rented Moscow apartment.

Tajik Interior Ministry spokesman Makhmadali Shafatov said one of the two suspects, Masrudzhon Yatimov, claimed Shurpayev had offered him money nine days earlier to have sex.

WORLD BRIEFS

New Zealander convicted of cyber crime

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A New Zealand teenager accused of helping lead an international cyber crime network has been convicted of computer hacking crimes. Computer programmer Owen Thor Walker, 18, pleaded guilty Tuesday to six charges related to using computers for illegal purposes. Police alleged he was involved in a crime ring that infiltrated 1.3 million computers and skimmed millions of dollars from victims' bank accounts. Judge Arthur Tompkins ordered Walker to remain in custody until May 28, when he will hand down a sentence. Walker faces several prison terms of up to five years.

White House raises hopes of missile deal

KIEV, Ukraine (AP)—The White House raised hopes Monday of achieving a breakthrough agreement to resolve bitter differences with Moscow over missile defenses in Europe when President Bush meets with Russian President Vladimir Putin this weekend. Bush's national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, said no deal was in hand yet but the two leaders could nail it down when they meet Sunday in the Black Sea resort of Sochi. "We may. We're hopeful," he said. It will be the last meeting between the two men before Putin steps away from the Russian presidency. Hadley briefed reporters on Air Force One as Bush flew to Ukraine to begin a weeklong trip in Eastern Europe, anchored by a NATO summit in Bucharest, Romania.

Another smooth transition for Botswana

GABORONE, Botswana (AP)—Botswana's president steps down Tuesday, handing over power in the kind of smooth transition for which the country is known—one that contrasts sharply with the political turmoil in neighboring Zimbabwe. On a continent where leaders are all too often accused of holding on long past their mandate, Festus Mogae, 69, is giving up

power before the end of his second term. That allows his vice president, Seretse Ian Khama, a former army commander and the son of Botswana first's president, to run as an incumbent in elections next year. "I retire a proud citizen," Mogae said at a farewell rally held by the ruling Botswana Democratic Party on Saturday.

Coroner exonerates Prince Philip

LONDON (AP)—A coroner rejected a conspiracy theory in the death of Princess Diana Monday, ruling there is no proof that Prince Philip or British secret agents had anything to do with the car crash that also killed her boyfriend Dodi Fayed. In instructions to the jury, Lord Justice Scott Baker left open the possibility that the couple's driver and the paparazzi who pursued them through Paris on Aug. 31, 1997 caused the crash through recklessness. The panel was also asked to consider whether the crash was an accident. "There is no evidence that the Duke of Edinburgh ordered Diana's execution and there is no evidence that the Secret Intelligence Service or any other government agency organized it," Baker told the 11-member jury.

Thanks Raul: Cubans can stay in hotels

HAVANA (AP)—Raul Castro's government opened luxury hotels and resorts to all Cubans Monday, ending a ban despised across the island as "tourist apartheid" and taking another step toward the creation of a consumer economy in the socialist state. Cuba has made a series of crowd-pleasing announcements in the past few days. Cubans with enough cash will be able to buy computers, DVD players and plasma televisions starting Tuesday, and soon they'll even be able to have their own cell phones—consumer goods only companies and foreigners were previously permitted to buy. But the latest surprise, allowing ordinary citizens into luxury hotels and resort beaches long reserved for rich foreigners, is a particularly symbolic victory for Cuba's everyman.

Two British soldiers killed in Afghanistan

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan (AP)—A clash in southern Afghanistan killed a Danish soldier and wounded two others Monday, officials said. A separate attack on a NATO patrol killed two British troops, officials said.

The clash with insurgents in volatile Helmand province brought to 14 the number of Danish troops who have been killed in Afghanistan since Denmark joined the U.S.-led coalition in 2002.

The blast that struck another NATO patrol in the same province killed two members of 40 Commando Royal Marines, Britain's Ministry of Defense said.

Ninety-one British troops have now died in Afghanistan since 2001.

Helmand, the biggest opium poppy-producing region in the world, has been the site of the bloodiest battles between insurgents and international forces.

Campus Life

NMC's graduating class takes an active role



Some members of NMC's graduating class of Spring 2008 pose with NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez, seated, second from right, after a recent meeting.

The Northern Marianas College's graduating class of Spring 2008 recently stepped up its involvement in the planning stage for the upcoming commencement cere-

monies by electing representatives who will actively participate in the selection of a keynote speaker, the nomination of student leadership awards, and other key components

of the ceremony.

"The graduating class of 2008 is composed of students with innovative and creative ideas," said NMC president Dr. Fernan-

dez. "Their involvement in this year's graduation ceremonies will make the event especially unique and memorable."

In a recent meeting, the grad-

Charter Day Committee extends deadline for vendors

The Northern Marianas College Charter Day Committee is inviting different agencies, businesses, clubs, and other civic organizations to participate in the upcoming Charter Day celebration. Organizations may purchase booth space for the following categories: food/drink,

specialty drinks (e.g. coffee coolers or pearl shakes), games booths, and retail (arts and crafts, toys, etc). The deadline to submit applications for booth spaces has been extended to this Friday, April 4, 2008.

The Charter Day Celebration will be held on April 11, 2008

at the As Terlaje Campus from 3:00 p.m. to 10 p.m. The event is one of NMC's largest and most-attended events. This year, the celebration will showcase a broad range of entertainment, including a variety of live band performances, the highly anticipated "Marianas Idol Contest,"

and cultural dance presentations.

Reserve booth space by paying the \$100 one-time fee (which covers the tents booth and access to 110v electricity outlets). Please contact Queanna Sablan at 234-5498 ext. 1253 or email queannas@nmcnet.edu if you have any questions. (NMC)

NMC celebrates TRIO with a beach cleanup

As part of its recent celebration of TRIO Day, staff and students of the Upward Bound and Student Support Services had a beach cleanup activity from the south traffic light intersection of Microl Corp. to Minatchom Atdao.

TRIO comprises Upward Bound, Educational Talent Search, and Student Support Services. TRIO participants and staff enjoyed cleaning along the Beach Road pathway and beach and later had a scrumptious lunch prepared by local caterers on the island. At the same time, the Educational Talent Search Program hosted a student workshop focused on teamwork, leadership, and communications skills at their office located at NMC.

TRIO Day is set aside to remind the community that the programs are available to assist CNMI students. Educational Talent Search serves students age 12-27 years. The ETS program identifies and assists individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who have the potential to succeed in higher education. The program provides academic, career, and financial counseling to its participants and encourages them to graduate from high school and continue on to the postsecondary school of their choice.

The Upward Bound Program serves public high school students ages 13-19 years. UBP provides fundamental support to low income and/or first generation participants



Upward Bound staff and Student Support Services staff and students take a break from their cleanup to gather for a photo.

in their preparation for college entrance. The program provides opportunities for participants to succeed in college performance and ultimately in higher education pursuits. Upward Bound provides tutoring, counseling, academic classes, mentoring, cultural exploration, educational fieldtrips, career exploration, workshops and seminars in college survival skills. The goal of Upward Bound is to increase the rates at which participants enroll in and graduate from institutions of postsecondary education.

Student Support Services serves college students. The goal of Student Support Services is to increase the retention of college

students and graduation rates, facilitate their transfer from two year to four year colleges, and foster an institutional climate supportive of the success of low income and first generation college students and students with disabilities. Student Support Services provides academic/career counseling individualized tutoring, assistance in applying for financial aid, workshops on study skills, and college transfer information.

For more information about these programs, contact Educational Talent Search at 234-5498, ext. 1347, Upward Bound at 234-9571, or Student Support Services at 234-5498, ext. 1276. (NMC)

uating class members elected officers to represent them in all aspects of the planning process. Those elected include: Queanna Sablan, president; Rose Marie Jones, vice president; Jacklyn Echon, secretary; Priscilla Maratita, treasurer; and June Seman, public relations officer.

Class members were also asked to consider nominating leaders within their class whom they would like to recognize at the ceremony. A committee has been tasked with interviewing

and selecting prospective nominees. Furthermore, as part of the college's effort to incorporate new traditions to the graduation festivities, the graduating class was asked to select among themselves a "student marshal" who has made a positive impact at the college and who whose chief responsibilities will include leading the graduates to their seats.

The graduation ceremony for Spring 2008 will be held on May 24, 2008 at the Marianas High School Gym. (NMC)

CAMPUS BULLETIN

Hopwood upcoming events

April 4: Half-day schedule. Students will be dismissed at 12:30pm. Issuing of 3rd Quarter report card will be from 2:30pm to 5:30pm

April 10: PTSA meeting at 6pm in the school cafeteria. Topic: Promotion and Accreditation

April 14-18: Testing days for the SAT 10. Students' attendance is important for these testing dates

May 4,5,6: Accreditation visit. Parent and community involvement is highly encouraged

May 19-20: 8th Grade Final Exams

May 28: 8th Grade Promotion Day (2:30pm-5:30pm) (PR)

SSHS 3Q report card issuance

To all parents/legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: The third quarter report card is scheduled to be released on Thursday, April 3, from 4pm to 7pm. Parents will pick up the report cards from the counseling office. (PR)

KES sets Parent Teacher Conference

Parents and guardians of students attending Koblerville Elementary School are informed that today, April 1, 2008, is 3rd Quarter Parent Teacher Conference Day. Report cards may be picked up from 4pm to 6pm at Koblerville Elementary School. Teachers will be available to speak with parents at this time. Student dismissal time from school on this day will be at 12:30pm—half day. Should you have any questions, call the school at 237-3622 or 237-3623. (PR)

MHS Calendar of Events

April 2: MHS Open House, Report card distribution 4pm-6pm MHS campus, students will be released at 1pm

April 21-25: SAT10 Tests

May 5-16: Advanced Placement Tests

May 12-16: Standards-Based Assessment Tests

May 26: No classes (Memorial Day)

May 31: MHS Commencement Ceremony

June 3: Fourth Quarter ends (PR)

OES PTSA meeting next week

The PTSA Officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform the parents and guardians of Oleai Elementary School that there will be a PTSA meeting next Tuesday, April 8, 2008, 6pm, in the school cafeteria. (PR)

KagES registration starts

Kagman Elementary School will start registering children for grades Kindergarten to 5th for school year 2008-2009. Registration begins on April 1, 2008 and ends on April 30, 2008, from 9am to 4pm daily.

Kagman Elementary School will register children from the following areas only: Kagman I, II, III, Upper Papago (Botanical Garden to Kagman), Agag, and As Teo.

Kindergarten students: Child must be 5 years old, on or before Aug. 31.

First grade students: Child must be 6 years old, on or before Aug. 31.

The following documents are required for your child(ren) to be enrolled: official registration form, birth certificate, CHC health certificate (original), transcript/report card/withdrawal from existing school, entry permit, if not a U.S. citizen, affidavit of guardianship/power of attorney (if applicable), map of residence, and health insurance policy. All students registering must have complete documents submitted on or before the end of the designated registration dates.

For more information, call the school at 237-3965/3966/3967. (PR)

Life & Style

Hard Rock hosts appreciation party

Hard Rock Café hosted a special cocktail event Monday evening to introduce to the Saipan community its new regional director of operations, Shabbir Godil, who will be handling both Guam and

Saipan branches of the café.

The event also marked the return to Saipan of HRC regional executive chef Kotwal Singh, who has decided to resettle on Saipan after an extended stint in Guam.

Hard Rock Café Saipan owner Norberto Herrero led his staff and other HRC officials during the appreciation party at the Elvis Room of Hard Rock Café in downtown Garapan Monday night.



Hard Rock Café Saipan owner Norberto Herrero, right, joins HRC regional director of operations-Guam and Saipan Shabbir Godil and HRC regional executive chef Kotwal Singh during the appreciation party at the Elvis Room of Hard Rock Café in downtown Garapan Monday night.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Hard Rock Café regional executive chef Kotwal Singh poses with restaurant manager Anna Rose Ching, restaurant supervisor Mikka Valencia, Hard Rocker Liezzle Viola, resident chef Roderick "Boyot" Galindo, chef Oliver Tianzon, chef Raul Molinar, and chef Maniraj Sunuwarrai.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Hard Rockers Maelyn, Sheye, Hazel, Roda, Weng, April, Danny and Oliver strike a pose.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hard Rock Café Saipan management team members have their picture taken with HRC regional director of operations-Guam and Saipan Shabbir Godil.



Hard Rock Café Saipan operations manager Aldwin Cullat, retail supervisor Lani Angeles and restaurant manager Anna Rose Ching gather for a picture with HRC's Hard Rockers.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Retail supervisor Lani Angeles, restaurant supervisor Mikka Valencia, kitchen supervisor Vinz Macaraeg, restaurant supervisor Danilo Yuso and restaurant manager Anna Rose Ching during the appreciation party.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Chef Raul Molinar prepares a pancake for the guests.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Hard Rock Café Regional director of operations-Guam and Saipan Shabbir Godil with HRC Saipan operations manager Aldwin Cullat, restaurant manager Anna Rose Ching, retail supervisor Lani Angeles, restaurant supervisor Mikka Valencia, resident chef Roderick "Boyot" Galindo, kitchen supervisor Vinz Macaraeg and restaurant supervisor Danilo Yuso.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Chef Maniraj Sunuwarrai heats up the pan in preparing spaghetti for the party guests.

JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ



Ancient gold necklace is discovered in Peru

WASHINGTON (AP)—The earliest known gold jewelry made in the Americas has been discovered in southern Peru. The gold necklace, made nearly 4,000 years ago, was found in a burial site near Lake Titicaca, researchers report in Tuesday's issue of Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

The discovery "was a complete shock," said Mark Aldenderfer, an anthropologist at the University of Arizona.

"It was not expected in the least," he said in a telephone interview. "It's always fun to find something and go, 'Wow, what is that doing here?'"

In the past, it had been assumed that a society needed to be settled to produce agricultural surpluses that can support activities such as making ornamental objects, he explained.

But the people living in this region at the time were still primarily hunter-gatherers, he said. "They were on their way to becoming settled peoples, but they were not quite there yet."

Someone, though, had the time and knowledge to make this ornament, which he speculates is a sign of importance.

"These folks are obtaining this by their effort, accumulating more wealth and using objects for prestige," Aldenderfer said. It says: "Pay attention to me, I'm successful."

There is no evidence at the site that shows how it was made, he said. But it looks like a nugget of native raw gold, which occurs near the area, was pounded flat in a stone mortar and pestle.

Then the gold was probably wrapped around a piece of wood and pounded until it was folded into a tube, he said.

The researchers restrung the necklace, alternating nine small gold tubes with a series of round stones, identified as either greenstone or turquoise, with holes in them that were found in the same grave.

The next oldest gold ornaments found in this hemisphere, also located in Peru but farther north, date to about 600 years later than this necklace, Aldenderfer said.

Scott Raymond, an archaeologist at the University of Calgary, Canada, said the date of the necklace is "remarkably early for that region to have something of that order."

He said he had not previously seen any substantial evidence from that period of the kind of ceremonialism that developed later.

The oldest previously known worked gold was found in highland Peru and dated to about 3,500 years ago, said Raymond, who was not part of the research team.

Heather Lechtman of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology called the design "very interesting for such a very early piece of jewelry."

Lechtman, who was not part of the research team, said it was not surprising that early people used gold because it is available in that area and easy to work.

The research was funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation and the University of Missouri.



This undated handout photo provided by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences shows a reconstruction the gold and turquoise beads as a necklace.

Archaeologists start Stonehenge dig

Archaeology students Steve Bush, right, and Sam Ferguson, left, sieve through earth amongst the stones at Stonehenge, England, Monday, March 31, 2008.

AP



LONDON (AP)—Some of England's most sacred soil was disturbed Monday for the first time in more than four decades as archaeologists worked to solve the enduring riddle of Stonehenge: When and why was the prehistoric monument built?

The excavation project, set to last until April 11, is designed to unearth materials that can be used to establish a firm date for when the first mysterious set of bluestones was put in place at Stonehenge, one of Britain's best known and least understood landmarks.

The World Heritage site, a favorite with visitors the world over, has become popular with Druids, neo-Pagans and New Agers who attach mystical significance to the strangely shaped circle of stones, but there remains great debate about the actual purpose of the structure.

The dig will be led by Timothy Darvill, a leading Stonehenge scholar from Bournemouth University, and Geoffrey Wainwright, president of the Society of Antiquaries. Both experts have worked to pinpoint the site in the Preseli Mountains in south Wales where the bluestones—the earliest of the large rocks erected at the site—came from. They will be able to com-

pare the samples found in Wales to those at Stonehenge on the Salisbury Plain.

"The excavation will date the arrival of the bluestones following their 153-mile journey from Preseli to Salisbury Plain and contribute to our definition of the society which undertook such an ambitious project," Wainwright said. "We will be able to say not only why, but when the first stone monument was built."

Scientists believe the bluestones were first put in place about 2600 B.C., but they concede the date is only an approximation at best. The original bluestones were removed about 200 years later and scientists hope to find bits of them embedded in the earth.

Darvill said the excavation marks the first opportunity to bring the power of modern scientific archaeology to bear on a problem that has taxed the minds of so many experts since medieval times: Why were the bluestones so important to have warranted bringing them from so far away?

The excavation goal is to find remnants of the original bluestones, or related materials, that can be subjected to modern radiocarbon dating techniques to establish a more precise

timeline for the construction of Stonehenge, said Dave Batchelor, an archaeologist with English Heritage, which oversees the Stonehenge site.

"We have to find the material that will give us a good date," he said. "That's where the luck comes in. We could get an absolute blank or we could get something magnificent or we could get something in between."

He said bluestones have an "inky, bluey, black" appearance and come from the Preseli Mountains in South Wales. About 6 feet tall, they are the smaller stones that make up part of the monument, alongside the larger sarsen stones, which are about twice as tall and were added later.

It is hoped that fixing the date of the start of construction with more precision will allow scientists to finally grasp how and why the monument was built. They also may learn more about how the stones were transported. Research shows the bluestones, weighing an estimated five tons apiece, may have been dragged from the mountains in south Wales to the sea, put on huge rafts and floated up the River Avon.

Archaeologists believe that before the bluestones were put in place, Stonehenge consisted

of a circle of wooden posts and timbers built in approximately 3100 B.C.

The research that began Monday with the digging of a trench marks the first time ground inside the inner stone circle has been excavated since 1964. The area, revered as a powerful link to England's pagan past, is so sensitive that Cabinet approval was needed before the work could begin.

Renee Fok, a spokeswoman with English Heritage, said the project was okayed only after experts were convinced of its potential value. She said the project represents "the logical next step" after the two professors located the source of the bluestones in Wales.

"It's the culmination of their work, it makes sense to go back to the stone circle and get a date," she said.

"We want to strike a balance. We want the best research, but we can't just say go ahead and dig as you like, it's a very fragile area. Even the Druids are happy with this project, we've spoken to them and they don't object."

She said tourists will be able to visit Stonehenge as usual and will also be able to watch live video coverage of the excavation in special tents at the site.

Jury: Smith son died of drug overdose

NASSAU, Bahamas (AP)—A Bahamas jury ruled Monday that Anna Nicole Smith's son died from an accidental drug overdose, just like his mother.

The seven-member jury, which deliberated for less than two hours, recommended no criminal charges in the September 2006 death of 20-year-old Daniel Smith.

The son of the former Playboy playmate died after coming to the Bahamas to meet his new baby sister on Sept. 10, 2006. His mother died early the next year in Florida from an accidental drug overdose at age 39.

Police had said there was no evidence of homicide, and autopsies found that Daniel died from a combination of drugs, including methadone and antidepressants. But Bahamian authorities ordered the inquest amid widespread speculation over the circumstances surrounding his death.

In its ruling, the jury said the cause of death was "nondependent use of drugs," meaning that Daniel Smith was not addicted and was not aware the drugs in his system would kill him.

Neil McCabe, an attorney for Anna Nicole's mother, Virgie Arthur, said she was disappointed

in the ruling because she suspected foul play was involved. Arthur has claimed previously that Anna Nicole's boyfriend and attorney Howard K. Stern played a role in both deaths, but she did not provide evidence.

"We don't think it makes any sense," McCabe said. "The boy was not a drug user, the judge said so. Why would he all of a sudden take a massive dose of methadone?"

Stern, who has denied giving Daniel any drugs, said outside court that he was not sure whether the jury's decision would bring an end to the case.

"I have no control over them," he said of Arthur and her attorneys.

Magistrate William Campbell said the jury's decision ended the case as far the courts in the Bahamas were concerned.

The inquest began in November and heard from more than two dozen witnesses.

Anna Nicole's former boyfriend, Larry Birkhead, testified that Daniel was a troubled young man who struggled with drugs and alcohol. But Stern said he was surprised at the autopsy report and said he had never seen Daniel using drugs.

'Idol' Cook has friends in the kitchen

SELMA, Ore. (AP)—Desiree Eddy cooks for the folks who crowd the Country Folks Restaurant on "American Idol" night, but she doesn't let that keep her from the telephone.

Dialing as fast as she can, Eddy figures she can vote 600 times for local contestant Kristy Lee Cook—if the toll-free phone lines don't jam up, that is.

"We stay up and vote non-stop," said Eddy, who has to get up long before dawn to start the grill for breakfast. "She comes from such a small town that we have to vote twice as hard to keep her in."

The Deer Creek Valley around this small rural crossroads only has about 3,000 people, but on "Idol" night, many of them are poised to vote as many times as they can for Cook. Country Folks owners Alicia and Stan Kinsey, Eddy's mom and dad, keep the restaurant open past their normal 3 p.m. closing so folks who don't have satellite TV can come and watch; for those who can't, they

put Cook's voting number on the reader board outside.

"It just kind of grew," said Eddy. "Now it's huge. The customers are really cool. They come about 7 and order so we can get everything out by 8 o'clock and we all can watch. It's like family."

Selma is an unincorporated community on the edge of the Rogue-Siskiyou National Forest; the community was in the heart of Oregon's gold rush in the 1850s and the timber boom after World War II. Both have gone bust, leaving Selma with a handful of businesses mostly focused on drawing passers-by off the two-lane blacktop, and a scattering of rural homes ranging from mansions to singlewides. Horses, llamas and goats graze in grassy fields and snowcapped mountains ring the valley.

In 2002, Selma feared for its very life as the Biscuit fire, the biggest in the nation that year at 500,000 acres, bore down.

Born in the Seattle area,

Cook, 24, moved to a log house here as a 14-year-old, when her parents, Larry and Carlene Cook, were looking for a place that split the distance between Reno, Nev., where one daughter was a swimmer at the University of Nevada, and Eugene, Ore., where a son was a wide receiver at the University of Oregon.

None would comment for this story because "Idol" has confidentiality agreements from family and friends of contestants.

The Grants Pass Daily Courier has followed Cook's career, reporting that she got her big break in 1998, when she opened at a nearby music festival for Glen Campbell. That led to a record deal and an album. Her dad, a softball coach at a junior college in Northern California, told the newspaper that after failing an "Idol" audition in San Diego Kristy sold a horse to pay for a second try in Philadelphia, where her rendition of "Amazing Grace" got her in.

Back home, Cook rides hors-

es and stops in for country fried steak or cinnamon roll French toast at the Country Folks Restaurant, where she always sits in a corner booth, said Eddy.

At the neighboring Clear Creek Family Practice, Dr. Katherine Mechling doesn't watch TV, but follows Cook's fortunes in the newspaper. Her 14-year-old niece, Audrey Mechling, doesn't know Cook, but was thrilled and surprised to see her on TV during the Philadelphia auditions for "Idol."

"We were like, 'I bet she's not going to be good,' but then she made it," said Audrey, pulling off a set of soapy gloves and putting down a scouring pad to talk. "It's so cool, because no one had ever heard of Selma before."

At the Crystal Kaleidoscope, owner Louis Swisher has been undaunted by the tough criticism leveled at Cook by judge Simon Cowell.

"When he does say something good," Swisher said, "it means a lot more."



AP

Already sentenced for driving while intoxicated, defendants take part in court proceedings as Belen, N.M., High School seniors listen to the proceedings of Valencia County Magistrate Judge Daniel H. Hawkes during a Courts to Schools Program on Thursday, March 27, 2008. The school auditorium was turned into a courtroom when five DWI offenders were sentenced.

NM judge takes his courtroom to school

BELEN, N.M. (AP)—Marlene Chavez stood before a hushed courtroom, acknowledging the consequences of her second drunken-driving offense. Among the spectators were hundreds of teenagers who hung on her every word.

"I lost a lot of things," said Chavez, 43. "I left my vehicle in the impound so that I don't do drinking and driving after that. And I lost my house. I lost my kids to their father so that they can go stay with him because I had nowhere to go."

Chavez had already pleaded guilty. Now a judge gave her four days in jail and a \$500 fine. But her sentence came with an additional indignity: It happened in a high school auditorium, where 400 students stared as she lifted one leg, then the other, to let jailers shackle her feet. Guards also wrapped a chain around her waist and handcuffed her.

When the hearing ended, she was escorted out of Belen High School, about 30 miles south of Albuquerque, and locked up.

Magistrate Daniel Hawkes brought his courtroom to the school in hopes that the proceedings will show students the dangers of alcohol, especially in the weeks leading up to the prom and graduation.

Hawkes, whose program is unique in New Mexico, also sentenced two people at the school last year. He brings with him a plywood court bench emblazoned with a New Mexico Supreme Court seal. The makeshift courtroom also includes U.S. and New Mexico flags.

Ed Chavez, chief justice of the high court and no relation to Marlene Chavez, said he would like to see the program go statewide.

When the hearing began, 18-year-old Angel Mendez didn't realize the seriousness of the proceedings. But after watching Marlene Chavez and four other repeat offenders get sentenced, he changed his view.

"I thought it was pretty shocking just to see them like that. I didn't think they would have them in shackles," he said.

Elizabeth Sluder, 17, was initially skeptical, too, thinking the hearing was overly staged. But she also changed her mind by the end.

"You see your friends, you know, they're like, 'I'm going to go out to this party.' But you never see the consequences of them getting in trouble or getting in an accident, or any kind of consequence of driving drunk," she said. "But here, it's actually being brought to us. It does happen, there are consequences."

Michael A. Martone, a Michigan judge, started the first court-in-schools program in 1993, sentencing offenders who pleaded guilty to charges ranging from drunken-driving to assault and battery. He has held hearings at high schools and middle schools in Troy and Clawson, Mich.

In 2000, Martone's program became the model for the outreach program at the National Judicial College in Reno, Nev. Hawkes said he learned of the program while attending the judicial college.

Other touches he came up with himself, including his mobile courtroom, which is hauled around in a trailer that he bought for \$6,800. On the side of the trailer is: "Judicial Outreach Team. Courts are the crossroads of prevention. It's NOT KOOL to SKIP School. Stay in school."

Sluder was struck by the emotional impact of the sentencing and the statements from the defendants.

"I can't imagine how those people felt standing up and having to talk to all of us kids, especially because we can see them in the community," she said. "It just makes it real."



AP

Desiree Eddy, who cooks at her family's Country Folks Restaurant, talks Thursday, March 27, 2008 in Selma, Ore. about voting as many times as she can for American Idol contestant Kristy Lee Cook, who comes from this crossroads community in southwestern Oregon.

British artist Angus Fairhurst dies

LONDON (AP)—Angus Fairhurst, one of the group of "Young British Artists" who stormed the international art scene in the 1990s, has died. He was 41.

Fairhurst's spokeswoman Erica Bolton said Monday that the artist committed suicide Saturday during a walk in a remote part of Scotland. She did not specify how he died.

Born in 1966 in Penbury, southern England, Fairhurst studied at London's Goldsmiths College in the 1980s, where his contemporaries included Damien Hirst, Gary Hume and Sarah Lucas.

They and their work—first exhibited in the 1988 exhibition "Freeze"—were central to the group of provocative and playful young artists dubbed the "Young British Artists." Patronage by collector Charles Saatchi and intense media attention brought riches and fame to several of the group, notably Hirst and Tracey Emin.

Fairhurst had a lower profile, but his paintings, sculptures and installations were exhibited around the world. His work was included in the 2000 "Apocalypse" exhibition at the Royal Academy and in 2004,

Fairhurst, Lucas and Hirst collaborated on the "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" show at Tate Britain.

Fairhurst's last show was at London's Sadie Coles gallery last month.

Tate director Nicholas Serota said Fairhurst "made some of the most engaging, witty and perceptive works of his generation and was an enormously influential friend of other British artists who came to prominence in the early '90s. We shall all miss him greatly."

Hirst called Fairhurst a great artist and friend.

"He always supported me,

in fair weather and foul," Hirst said. "He shone like the moon and as an artist he had just the right amount of slightly round the bend. I loved him."

Strathclyde Police said the body of a 41-year-old man—believed to be Fairhurst—had been found in woodland in the Scottish Highlands on Saturday afternoon. They added that an autopsy would be made and said that foul play was not suspected.

Fairhurst is survived by his mother, Sally, and brother, Charles. Funeral details were not immediately available.

O'Jays son dies after being taken from jail

CLEVELAND (AP)—Sean Levert, a third of the 1980s R&B trio LeVert and son of lead O'Jays singer Eddie Levert, has died after falling ill while serving a jail term. He was 39. Authorities said Monday that an autopsy was inconclusive but foul play was ruled out.

Levert was sentenced last week to one year and 10 months in jail for failing to pay \$89,025 in child support. He died at Lutheran Hospital in Cleveland late Sunday, less than an hour after he was taken there from the jail, said coroner Frank Miller.

Levert was sentenced by Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Judge Nancy Margaret Russo, who said a presentence report indicated he had been addicted to marijuana from the time he was 14 until recently. He didn't speak at his sentencing and gave no indication of any health problems, the judge said Monday.

His brother Gerald Levert, who had success as a solo artist after leaving their trio died in 2006 at age 40 of an accidental mix of prescription and over-the-counter drugs.

The brothers had formed LeVert in the 1980s with childhood friend Marc Gordon. Their hits included "Baby I'm Ready," "(Pop, Pop, Pop, Pop) Goes My Mind" and "Casanova."

"Casanova" was nominated for a Grammy in 1988 for best R&B performance by a duo or group with vocal. It was also nominated for best R&B song.

At Gerald Levert's funeral service in November 2006, Sean Levert and his father performed "Dance With My Father" and personalized the words for Gerald. The elder Levert's group, the O'Jays, was known for such smash hits as "Back Stabbers" and "Love Train."

Sean Levert found a new third partner last year and was trying to revive LeVert.

An autopsy was done Monday but no immediate cause of death was determined, according to Powell Caesar, a spokesman for the Cuyahoga County's coroner's office, but he said there was no evidence of foul play or trauma.

Levert suffered from high blood pressure and had been hallucinating in jail, Caesar said. Toxicology reports could take four to six weeks, he said.

Warden Kevin McDonough said earlier that Levert had been sick and guards were watching him at the jail's regular cellblock because he had been acting strangely.

Sean Levert had pleaded guilty last week to six counts of nonsupport involving children ages 11, 15 and 17.

Simpson out of hospital, feeling better

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jessica Simpson is feeling "much better" after being hospitalized with a kidney infection. Simpson was admitted to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center on Friday for a "minor kidney infection" and was released Monday, Simpson's representative Lauren Auslander told The Associated Press. In Touch magazine reported Simpson's hospitalization Monday.

Auslander said the 27-year-old singer-actress is feeling "much better now."

According to the In Touch report, Dallas Cowboys quarterback Tony Romo, Simpson's current squeeze, wanted to be by Simpson's side but had prior commitments in Dallas.

Simpson is currently working on a country music album.



Singer Jessica Simpson is seen at a NBA basketball game between the Los Angeles Lakers and Dallas Mavericks in Dallas, in this March 18, 2008 file photo.

Kathie Lee Gifford to join NBC's 'Today'

NEW YORK (AP)—Kathie Lee Gifford will soon be back on TV's early shift.

The former co-star of the syndicated "Live" talk show will join NBC's "Today" next Monday. She will be teamed with Hoda Kotb (pronounced HODAH COT-bee), a current anchor of the program's seven-month-old fourth hour, which airs live at 10 a.m. EDT.

The announcement was made during Monday's broadcast,

with Gifford seated alongside the program's established stars, including Matt Lauer and Meredith Vieira, co-hosts of the first two hours.

Gifford, 54, who left Regis Philbin and "Live" in 2000, joked that the timing of her TV return "couldn't be worse" in certain ways: "I'm eight years older, 10 pounds heavier, a half-inch shorter, and just in time for HD television."

Long married to former NFL

star and sports announcer Frank Gifford, she joked, "It's going to be good to be working. I'm really tired of staying home and watching Frank's old highlight films."

Ann Curry will continue her role as news anchor of the 7 a.m.-9 a.m. hours of "Today," as well as co-host, with Al Roker, of the 9 a.m. hour. Natalie Morales will join Curry and Roker as a third co-host at 9 a.m., and will serve as the show's national correspondent, the network said.

Heather Mills to judge Miss USA Pageant

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Heather Mills soon will be back in front of the cameras. The former Mrs. Paul McCartney, who recently wrapped up a very public divorce from the ex-Beatle, is among the celebrity judges just announced for the upcoming Miss USA Pageant.

Other judges for the April 11 competition include actor/comedian Rob Schneider, actor/musician Joey Fatone, actress Kristian Alfonso, Olympic-champion swimmer Amanda Beard, actress Kelly Carlson and San Diego Chargers linebacker Shawne Merriman.

Donny and Marie Osmond will host the telecast of the 57th annual pageant, aired live from Las Vegas on NBC.

Contestants from 50 states and the District of Columbia will be judged in the swimsuit, evening gown and interview categories.



Brothers Marlon, Shawn, Damon and Keenen Ivory Wayans, from left to right, pose during arrivals for a screening of "White Chicks" in Los Angeles, June 16, 2004.

Wayans brothers drop Oakland studio bid

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP)—The Wayans brothers have dropped their bid to build a movie studio and shopping center at the former Oakland Army base over conflicts with the nearby port of Oakland.

Wayans business partner Britten Shuford said the brothers

failed to get a commitment from the city to preserve the site's San Francisco Bay views.

The port plans to stack storage containers and build a dividing wall that would block views of the bay.

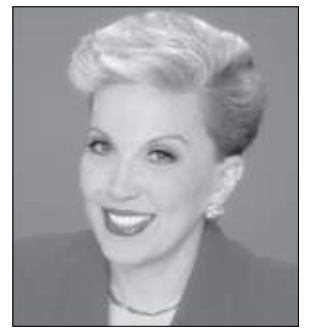
Oakland business officials say the Wayans' decision to back out

after long-standing negotiations over the 100-acre parcel clears the path for other proposals on developing the base, which closed in 1999.

Oakland Mayor Ron Dellums has released a list of 13 other developers interested in building on the site.

Manager who grabs brass ring ends up with tarnished hands

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: I just made the biggest career mistake of my life. I was working for a wonderful company. Then a former co-worker told me about a management position opening at the agency she went to work for. I thought it would be my golden opportunity for advancement. I submitted my resume and, after two interviews, got the job.

The problem: This is the unfriendliest company I have ever seen. Management belittles staff. Praise is seldom given. There is no kindness, no "good mornings" uttered—the people here are just plain MEAN.

I am a friendly, outgoing person, and I'm having a hard time adapting. I miss my old job. I realize now that I made a hasty decision, and I don't know what to do. My old position has been filled, so there's no way I can go back. What should I do?

—RELUCTANT MANAGER IN VERMONT

DEAR RELUCTANT MANAGER: Your predicament proves the truth of the saying, "The grass isn't always greener." For the sake of your mental health, start looking for another job. There is no way you are going to change the corporate culture in the place you're now working.

Don't discount your old workplace; stay in touch. Something may open up there, and your former colleagues may be glad to welcome you back.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: Help! I am engaged to a man with three kids—a 7-year-old girl and 9-year-old twin boys—and soon to become a stepmom. He has them about half the time.

The family all believe their biological mother is failing miserably, and I feel as though they view me as a suitable substitute. I like his children, but I have three of my own. One is grown; two are teenagers. I see the light at the end of the tunnel and do not want to start over again raising someone else's kids.

Can I marry this man and not have to raise his kids? Or is that what a stepmother does? I would be happy just being their friend.

—UNCERTAIN STEPMOM IN NEW ENGLAND

DEAR UNCERTAIN: Although you would be happy just being their friend, at their ages and with the biological mother "failing miserably," face it: There will be plenty of mothering going on. Of course you will have a hand in raising those children—it goes with the territory. If that's not what you are willing to sign on for, you should not marry him. Sorry.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Lee," and I have been married two years and have kept all of our finances separate, including having different auto insurance policies.

While I was away on a business trip, Lee moved my car and parked it in our circular driveway. Subsequently, a tree limb broke and dented my car's trunk.

I was extremely distressed that damage was done to my car when I wasn't even in the vicinity. I feel that, as a minimum, Lee should pay half of my car's deductible. He refuses because he says it was an act of nature.

Obviously neither of us was directly to blame, but I truly believe he should pay half the deductible because he moved my car in the first place. What do you think?

—OUT ON A LIMB IN GEORGIA

DEAR OUT ON A LIMB: I see the logic. However, it depends on why your husband moved your car. If Lee moved it because it was street-cleaning or trash collection day, then he should not be penalized. However, if he moved it on a whim, he should fork over his half of the deductible.

■ ■ ■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

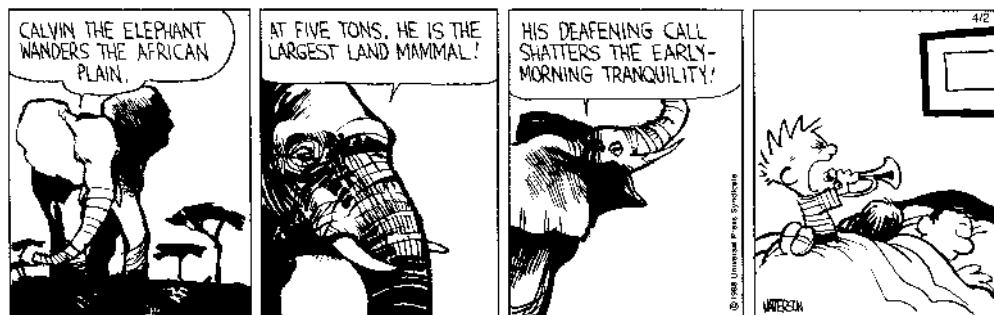
■ ■ ■

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more attractive person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson



Garfield®

By Jim Davis



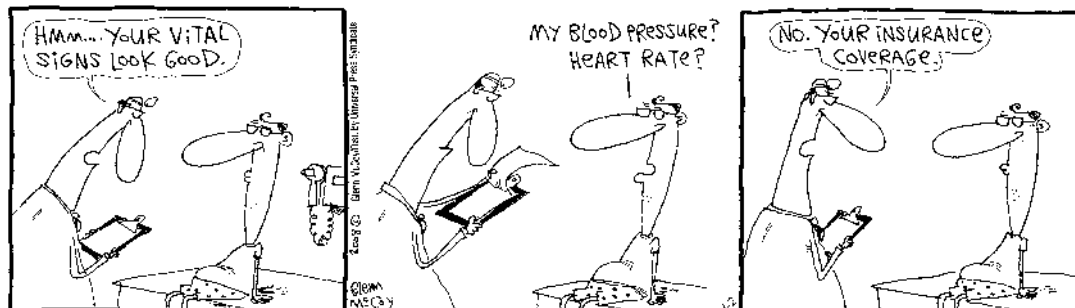
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

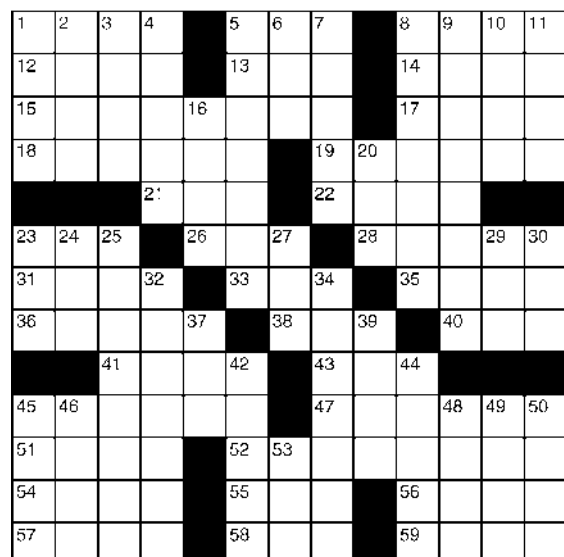
By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS**
- 1 — mater
5 Piglet's mama
8 Carpet style
12 Profit
13 Dance syllable
14 What tee-totalers don't do
15 Cling
17 Addition-ally
18 Claim
19 Ducks
21 Collec-tion
22 St. Louis team
23 Scrooge's cry
26 Slithery swimmer
28 Informa-tive
31 Sci-fi villain
33 Plagia-rize
35 Crou-pier's tool
36 Lily variety
- DOWN**
- 10 Basilica area
11 The Bee —
16 Gratis
20 Forefront
23 Telly net
24 Carte lead-in
25 Continue with
27 Part of UCLA
29 Tackle moguls
30 Longing
32 Develop
34 Smuggle
37 Actress MacGraw
39 Incite
42 Lucy's partner in mischief
44 Members of the brass
45 Drop (down)
46 Excep-tional
48 Treaty
49 Beige
50 Scratch-ed (out)
53 Lennon's lady

Solution time: 21 mins.



Yesterday's answer 4-2



STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5951 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Christopher Meloni, 47; Emmylou Harris, 61; Linda Hunt, 63; Leon Russell, 66

Happy Birthday: Don't feel pressured to move too quickly to make a decision or to finalize a deal. Study carefully each situation you face. You have far greater control than you realize—you can organize your time and your priorities to reach the maximum end result. Your numbers are 2, 13, 20, 23, 25, 31



ARIES (March 21-April 19): An unusual connection will get you thinking about the possibilities that exist. Patience will be required and trimming your plans down to something that will not leave you short financially will be the key to your success. ****



TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Stick to what benefits you and your interests. Giving your money or donating to someone else's cause will end up in personal loss. Serious thought, planning and action will pay off if you go forward alone. **



GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't let anyone persuade you to go in one direction when you clearly want to go in another. Your imagination and intuition will lead you to the results you want. Avoid anyone who is using emotional blackmail. *****



CANCER (June 21-July 22): You'll be tempted to do things differently or to change your lifestyle if you meet someone who impresses you. Things are looking up and it's time for you to put your efforts into something you believe in. You won't have

to go far to find what you want. ***



LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Give more thought to your financial situation. Make creative adjustments that will help you budget efficiently. Now is not the time to pay for others or to support someone else's needs. ***



VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You'll be getting attention but don't let it go to your head. A money game or power struggle may cause you to lose out if you allow compliments to sway a decision you must make. Have fun but don't get too serious about what others are asking of you. ***



LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be creative when looking for answers but don't give in to something or someone who will make you angry or feel used later on. This is not the time to try to impress someone at the expense of losing out on something you want for yourself. ***



SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Travel and communication will lead you to a lucrative endeavor. You may want to make a physical or mental change in order to take full advantage of an opportunity or offer that is available. *****



SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You won't be thinking clearly when it comes to emotional or personal matters and this can lead to mistakes. Refrain from sharing your thoughts until you know where everyone else stands. Someone is likely to put restrictions on you. **



CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't fall into the trap that someone who wants your support dangles in front of you. If it

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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sounds too good to be true, it is. Do your research and make sure you understand all the possible consequences. Take the reins and make a few adjustments. ****



AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Don't shut down due to emotional upset. Instead, make adjustments and continue in the direction that suits you best. Your strength to move forward on your own will make a statement that will be respected. ***



PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be prepared to do some damage control if a secret matter is revealed because of an emotional mishap. You can come out of whatever situation looking good if you are conscious of what is fair and just for everyone involved. ***

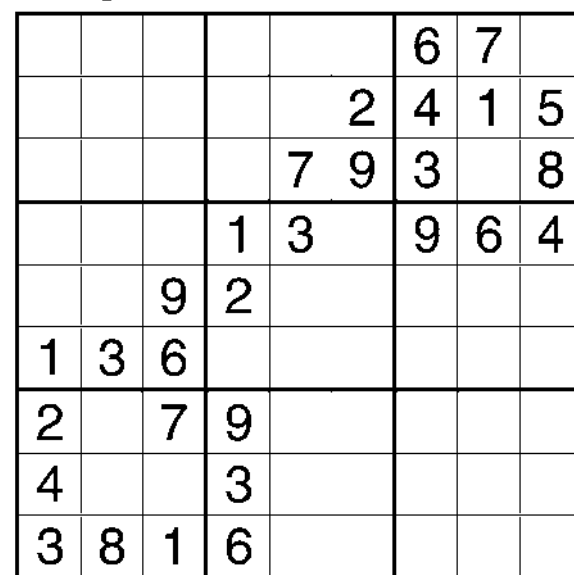
Birthday Baby: You are creative, sensitive and compassionate. You are insightful and helpful, an advocate of justice and fair play and passionate about standing up for the underdog.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

By Dave Green

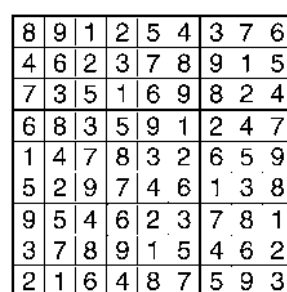


Difficulty Level ★★ ★

4/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer



Difficulty Level ★★

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

CHEMICAL BYPRODUCTS

Solution: 10 letters



© 2008 Universal Press Syndicate www.wonderword.com 4/2
Board, Care, Chlorine, Clean, Control, Danger, Detect, Develop, Dispose, Element, Environment, Food, Free, Fuel, Ground, Hazard, Health, Inspect, Isolated, Landfill, Law, Lead, Levels, Limit, Metals, Particles, Plant, Process, Purify, Reduce, Release, Remove, Risks, Safety, Science, Soil, Solution, Solvent, Source, Studies, Test, Toxic, Treated, Waste, Water
Yesterday's Answer: Lockup
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Job Vacancy Announcements

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to
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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER



The \$138M Tigers open with thud, lose to Royals



**D E -
T R O I T**
(A P) —

The frugal Kansas City Royals held on to beat the \$138 million (€87 million) Detroit Tigers 5-4 in 11 innings and give Trey Hillman a win in his major league debut as manager on Monday.

The Royals, with a payroll among MLB's smallest at \$58 million (€36.7 million), rallied from a three-run deficit and held off a late comeback with Tony Pena Jr.'s two-out, tiebreaking single in the 11th inning.

Miguel Cabrera hit a homer in his Detroit debut, helping the star-studded home team lead 3-0 through five innings, but Justin Verlander had a lackluster start to spoil the party.

Rays 6, Orioles 2

At Baltimore, a whirlwind off-season of change carried over into opening day for Tampa Bay, when the Rays reversed an annoying trend at the expense of Baltimore.

James Shields pitched seven innings of five-hit ball, Eric Hinske homered and the Rays coasted.

Since its inception in 1998, Tampa Bay was 1-9 in road openers, including a seven-game skid that was the longest active run in the big leagues. But things are different this year, beginning with the team's nickname—no longer are they the Devil Rays.

Indians 10, White Sox 8

At Cleveland, defending AL Central champion Cleveland won with familiar late-inning drama.

Casey Blake hit a three-run double in the eighth inning to beat Chicago. The Indians won 23 times in their final at-bat last season.

The teams combined for five homers, including a pair



MLB BRIEFS

Orioles cut off-injured OF Jay Gibbons

BALTIMORE (AP)—Jay Gibbons was released Sunday by the Baltimore Orioles, who lost patience waiting for the off-injured outfielder to regain the form that enabled him to hit 26 home runs in 2005. Gibbons batted .189 with no homers and four RBIs in 16 games this spring training after playing in only 84 games last season. Baltimore owes him \$11.9 million for the next two seasons as part of a \$21.1 million, four-year contract he agreed to in January 2006. The 31-year-old Gibbons was suspended for 15 days on Dec. 6 by commissioner Bud Selig following a media report that he received a shipment of the human growth hormone after January 2005, when it was banned by baseball. Kansas City outfielder Jose Guillen also was suspended for 15 days. On Friday, the commissioner's office and players' players association put the penalties on hold for 10 days to allow for further negotiations over their drug agreement. If a deal is struck, the suspensions likely would be dropped.

Astros waive Williams, owe pitcher \$6.5M

HOUSTON (AP)—Woody Williams was put on unconditional release waivers Saturday by the Houston Astros, who owe the pitcher \$6.5 million. The 41-year-old right-hander was 8-15 with a 5.27 ERA last season and had an 11.32 ERA in spring training this year. He gave up five runs and five hits in three innings Friday during a 10-0 exhibition loss to Detroit. First baseman Lance Berkman questioned the timing. "Possibly a bit premature," he said. "The game is completely different in the regular season than it is in spring training, especially from a guy like Woody who has been around the block a few times." Williams signed a \$12.5 million, two-year contract with the Astros before last season and is owed a \$6.25 million salary for this year and a \$250,000 buyout of a 2009 club option worth \$6.75 million.

of two-run drives by Chicago's Jim Thome off reigning AL Cy Young winner C.C. Sabathia.

Twins 3, Angels 2

At Minneapolis, Carlos Gomez made a strong first impression for Minnesota with Torii Hunter watching from the other side.

Gomez formally replaced Hunter as the center fielder and went 2-for-3, stealing two bases and scoring two runs including the tiebreaking run in the fifth on a single by Michael Cuddyer, giving Livan Her-

nandez and the Twins enough offense to beat Los Angeles with a snowstorm swirling outside the Metrodome.

Mariners 5, Rangers 2

At Seattle, the largest opening-day crowd in Safeco Field history of 46,334 watched the Seattle of-

fense wake up after Erik Bedard left his Mariners' debut.

Adrian Beltre hit a go-ahead groundout in the sixth inning, Jose Lopez had a two-run double in the seventh and the Mariners beat the Texas.

Bedard allowed three hits, including Michael Young's solo home run, in five innings and struck out five.

Kevin Millwood made his third consecutive opening-day start, tying a Texas record shared by Nolan Ryan and Charlie Hough, and allowed only four singles

and two unearned runs in six innings. He struck out four and walked three.

Mets 7, Marlins 2

At Miami, Johan Santana struck out eight in seven dominant innings, David Wright hit a three-run double and New York opened its season by beating the Florida Marlins.

Santana—traded from Minnesota and who signed a \$137.5 million (€87 million), six-year contract—didn't need much help in his anticipated debut.

The Mets took command with their

biggest inning on an opening day, scoring six runs in the fourth against Mark Hendrickson.

Dodgers 5, Giants 0

At Los Angeles, Joe Torre was victorious in his debut as manager of Los Angeles.

Brad Penny allowed four hits over 6 2-3 innings in his first opening-day start, Jeff Kent hit a two-run homer off Barry Zito and the Dodgers beat San Francisco.

Nationals 11, Phillies 6

At Philadelphia, Washington took its late-inning act on the road.

Nick Johnson's tiebreaking RBI double off Tom Gordon highlighted a five-run ninth inning and the Nationals beat Philadelphia.

Reigning NL MVP Jimmy Rollins hit a tying, two-run homer in the seventh, but the Phillies' bullpen blew it.

Brewers 4, Cubs 3, 10 innings

At Chicago, the start of the Cubs' 100th season since winning the World Series ended like so many seasons at Wrigley Field—with a loss.

Tony Gwynn hit a sacrifice fly in the 10th inning, and Milwaukee won.

Kosuke Fukudome went 3-for-3, hitting a tying, three-run homer in the ninth off Eric Gagne, but it wasn't enough for the Cubs, who haven't even reached the World Series since 1945.

Diamondbacks 4, Reds 2

At Cincinnati, defending NL West champion Arizona opened the season the way it spent much of the last one: Winning a close one.

Brandon Webb pitched six innings, and the light-hitting Diamondbacks piled up three solo homers in a victory that dampened Dusty Baker's debut as Cincinnati's manager.

Pirates 12, Braves 11

At Atlanta, Tom Glavine's homecoming was long forgotten by the time Pittsburgh finally got the win over Atlanta.

Xavier Nady hit his second homer of the game, a three-run shot in the 12th inning, and the Pirates overcame a horrific ninth to ruin the Braves home opener.

Padres 4, Astros 0

At San Diego, Jake Peavy beat his friend Roy Oswalt with his bat as well as his arm as San Diego blanked Houston.

The reigning NL Cy Young pitching award winner hit an RBI single and a sacrifice fly, and pitched seven innings of three-hit ball to lead the San Diego Padres to a 4-0 win over the Houston Astros in a season opener on Monday night.

Final opener at Yankee Stadium postponed

NEW YORK (AP)—The beginning of the end will have to wait. The final opening day at Yankee Stadium was postponed because of rain Monday, pushing back New York's game against the Toronto Blue Jays.

It was rescheduled for 7:05 p.m. on Tuesday, previously an off day in the series. Yankees right-hander Chien-Ming Wang and Toronto ace Roy Halladay remained slated to pitch.

"It's obviously a little anticlimactic. You want to get the first one in," Alex Rodriguez said. "Just have to wait."

New York owner George Steinbrenner showed up around noon for the 84th opening day at Yankee Stadium, but history was put on hold by steady rain and a wet forecast that washed away batting practice and the planned festivities.

The tarp was still on the field when the game was called at

about 2:30 p.m. after a delay of approximately 85 minutes. Players never got introduced, and Joe Girardi's debut as Yankees manager was postponed.

"I'm cautious about tomorrow, too," New York GM Brian Cashman said. "Tomorrow night is supposed to be dry, tomorrow day is supposed to be similar to what we just had."

"It's obviously not the way you want to start. You'd like to have opening day instead of opening night. But you do what you've got to do. It's still going to be opening day."

Next year, the Bronx Bombers will move into a \$1.3 billion new Yankee Stadium, under construction just across 161st Street.

"You see the new stadium, but it still seems like that's years away, even though it's only one," Derek Jeter said. "Just 100 yards away? That's not too far for the ghosts to go."

The Yankees have won 10 consecutive home openers, the best run in franchise history and the longest active streak in the majors, according to the Elias Sports Bureau.

The last time a Yankee Stadium opener was postponed came in 2003, when New York's game against Minnesota was snowed out. The next day, Hideki Matsui hit a grand slam during his debut in pinstripes.

"There's so many memories here that go beyond baseball," Jeter said.

The irony of the schedule, of course, is that Toronto plays its home games in a dome. If the teams had opened in Canada, weather wouldn't have been an issue.

"It would make sense, you would think," Jeter said with a chuckle.

New York is now scheduled to play 20 days in a row before

its first off day April 21. But the Yankees have trips to Kansas City, Boston, Baltimore, Chicago and Cleveland in April, so bad weather could force a few more postponements.

"Earlier in the year your starters aren't conditioned to go six, seven innings, so you may have to use your bullpen," Girardi said. "But we feel we have enough arms down there."

Girardi is taking over this season from his mentor, Joe Torre, who spent the past 12 years in charge.

Torre guided New York to the playoffs every season from 1996-2007 and won four World Series rings in his first five years. He walked away in the offseason when the club offered him just a one-year contract with a pay cut, then quickly was hired to manage the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Girardi met with reporters Monday morning and said he slept great the previous night.

AP
Kansas City Royals starter Gil Meche pitches against the Detroit Tigers in the first inning of a baseball game Monday, March 31, 2008, in Detroit.



O'Neal scores 9 in return, help Pacers beat Heat

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Jermaine O'Neal scored nine points after sitting out for more than two months with a knee injury, and the Indiana Pacers beat the Miami Heat 105-85 in the NBA on Monday.

O'Neal shot 3-for-4 from the field and 3-for-4 from the free-throw line in 18 minutes. He had missed 33 straight games with a bone bruise, and the Pacers went 12-21 during that period.

Danny Granger led Indiana with 23 points, and Daequan Cook led Miami with 16.

Raptors 104, Bobcats 100

At Charlotte, North Carolina, Chris Bosh scored 32 points and Toronto remained alone in sixth place in the Eastern Conference.

Bosh hit 13 of 16 free throws and added eight rebounds and five assists for the Raptors, who pulled a game ahead of idle Philadelphia in the playoff race.

Anthony Parker added 20 points and T.J. Ford added 15, including the clinching free throw with 1.9 seconds left for the Raptors.

Jason Richardson scored 18 of his 26 points in the first half, Gerald Wallace scored 20 points and Emeka Okafor had 18 points and 12 rebounds for Charlotte.

Hawks 116, Grizzlies 99

At Memphis, Tennessee, Josh Smith had 26 points, eight rebounds and six assists as Atlanta built an early lead.

The Hawks led by 38 in the third quarter and seemed to be coasting to the victory. However, Memphis opened the fourth with 13 consecutive points, part of a 23-4 run that made the game more interesting. However, the

Thomas says he's not talking to Hoosiers

ATLANTA (AP)—Embattled New York Knicks coach Isiah Thomas said he is not a candidate for the Indiana University job.

Thomas, whose Knicks have lost seven of eight and 14 of 16, has a 53-102 record in two seasons with the team. Though he helped Indiana win the 1981 NCAA championship, Thomas has never coached in college.

He indicated the Hoosiers haven't consulted him about becoming their head coach.

"No, I have a job," Thomas said before the Knicks played the Atlanta Hawks on Sunday.

Thomas, also the Knicks' team president, said he hopes interim coach Dan Dakich is named full-time at Indiana.

In February, Dakich replaced Kelvin Sampson, who resigned following the release of an NCAA report that said he committed five "major" violations involving recruiting. Prior to the start of the NCAA tournament, the school appointed a 10-member committee to search for a replacement for Sampson.

After Dakich—an assistant under Sampson and a former Indiana player and assistant under Bob Knight—took over, the Hoosiers (25-8) lost four of their final seven games, including a shocking last-second defeat against Minnesota in the Big Ten tournament quarterfinals and an 86-72 loss to Arkansas in the first round of the NCAA tournament.

"He's done an excellent job," Thomas said. "He understands the program. He's been intimately involved on the coaching side and also on the

playing side."

"Of all the former players, he'd definitely have the support of mine and others. I hope he's someone they do name as the coach of Indiana."

Thomas acknowledged that he might have interest in coaching one day in college.

"You never say never in terms of where you'll end up and who you'll be with," he said. "So you just try to take the day as it comes."

Right now, Thomas is trying to save his position with New York, which has reportedly talked with former Indiana Pacers president Donnie Walsh about taking charge of the organization.

Walsh hired Thomas as coach of the Pacers in 2000. In three years with Indiana, Thomas led the Pacers to a 131-115 record and three playoff appearances.

When Walsh brought in Larry Bird to run the Pacers in 2003, Thomas was fired.

With the NBA's fifth-worst record at 20-53, Thomas seemed to dislike a question about some of his players calling for a new coaching change.

"That player should put his name on it, if there is such a player," Thomas said. "But I think you have the opportunity and the access to all our players and you can ask them. I think it's safe to say that in any locker room, football, basketball or hockey, I don't think there's a coach coaching today that has 15 happy players. You have some that's unhappy and you have some that's happy. That's coaching."



Indiana Pacers' Jermaine O'Neal, right, puts up a shot over Miami Heat center Joel Anthony during the third quarter of an NBA basketball game in Indianapolis, Monday, March 31, 2008.

Hawks' advantage was just too much to overcome.

Al Horford and Joe Johnson scored 19 points apiece for Atlanta.

Rudy Gay led Memphis with 29 points.

Jazz 129, Wizards 87

At Salt Lake City, C.J. Miles scored a career-high 29 points and Utah set a team record with 15 3-pointers in a win over Washington.

Deron Williams had 12 points and 16 assists, despite resting most of the fourth quarter, and Mehmet Okur returned from a stomach virus

with 16 points, nine rebounds and five assists. Carlos Boozer added 19 points and Kyle Korver scored 15, making all six of his shots.

Utah outrebounded Washington 40-23, had 40 assists on 50 field goals and shot almost 60 percent (50-for-84).

Antawn Jamison led Washington with 22 points.

Suns 132, Nuggets 117

At Phoenix, Amare Stoudemire scored 41 points, Steve Nash had 36, and Phoenix rallied from a 22-point second-quarter deficit to down Denver and reach 50 wins

for the fourth straight season.

The comeback matched the third-best in Suns' history. They also rallied from a 22-point second-period deficit against the Boston Celtics in 1994. Stoudemire had 16 points in the fourth quarter when the Suns outscored Denver 46-25.

Stoudemire also had 14 rebounds, while Shaquille O'Neal had 20 points and 12 rebounds, and Raja Bell had 15 points and 10 rebounds.

J.R. Smith led the Nuggets with 23 points, Allen Iverson scored 21, Kenyon Martin 19, Carmelo Anthony finished with 18 points and 11 rebounds, and Marcus Camby scored 16.

Mavericks 93, Clippers 86

At Los Angeles, Jason Kidd scored 27 points, Josh Howard got 12 of his 25 in the fourth quarter, and Dallas held off banged-up but stubborn

Los Angeles.

Jason Terry had 20 points for Dallas, playing its fourth game since reigning MVP Dirk Nowitzki went down with knee and ankle injuries. Howard, who scored 30 or more points in the Mavericks' first three games without their leading scorer, was just 4-for-15 from the field over the first three quarters and 8-for-20 overall.

Rookie Al Thornton scored 26 points for the Clippers, who trailed throughout. Los Angeles lost for the 19th time in 22 tries after ending a season-worst 10-game losing streak Saturday night against Memphis.

Lopez twins both turning pro



The Lopez twins are going pro together. Stanford sophomore Robin Lopez is joining his 7-foot brother Brook in entering the NBA draft. The brothers made their announcement to The Associated Press on Monday through their mother, Deborah Ledford.

It was expected that Brook would declare himself eligible for the NBA, but Robin was not so certain. They were prep stars in Fresno, Calif., and came to Stanford together. Now they will depart as a tandem, too.

"This has been a very difficult decision for me because I really enjoyed my two years at Stanford," Robin Lopez said in a statement released to the AP. "I have always hoped I would have an opportunity to play in the NBA and I feel now is the right time to make that dream a reality."

Brook Lopez, a third-team All-American and a first-team Pac-10 selection, averaged 19.3 points and 8.2 rebounds to go with 56 blocks this season. He scored the game-winning basket with 1.3 seconds left in an 82-81 victory over Marquette in the second round of the NCAA tournament to put Stanford in the regional semifinals for the first time since 2001.

Both Brook and Robin will hire agents and thus forgo their remaining two years of college eligibility, their mom said.

"That's something we're still working on and finalizing," she said. "It's a definite decision. We'll be hiring agents."

He averaged 16.0 points and 7.1 rebounds in his two college seasons, blocking 101 shots and shooting 48 percent from the field in 53 games. Brook, who missed time earlier in the season because he was academically ineligible, scored in double figures in 41 games and scored a

career-high 31 points at Washington this season.

"After a great deal of thought and discussion with my family, I feel it is the appropriate time to enter the NBA draft," Brook Lopez said. "It is the dream of every basketball player to play and succeed in the NBA and I feel I am ready to take on this new challenge."

Robin's confidence during the tournament run was contagious, according to his teammates. He averaged 10.2 points and 5.2 boards and blocked 83 shots for the Cardinal.

Both Lopez brothers said they will return to Stanford over time to complete their degrees.

"Nobody's surprised. We wish they were staying, but they made their decisions," Stanford athletic director Bob Bowlsby said in Spokane, Wash., where the Cardinal women were playing Monday night in the NCAA regional final. "They're terrific players, no question about that. They've done

WKU's Darrin Horn heading to SCarolina

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Western Kentucky coach Darrin Horn is leaving for South Carolina after the Hilltoppers best finish in the NCAA tournament in 15 years.

Horn told the school's president Monday he had accepted an offer from the Gamecocks to replace Dave Odom, who retired at the end of the season, Western Kentucky University spokesman Bob Edwards said.

South Carolina athletic officials did not confirm Horn's hiring, but university trustees plan to meet Tuesday morning to approve a new athletic contract. A news conference to announce a new coach for the Gamecocks has been scheduled for later in the afternoon.

Horn, 35, went 111-48 in five seasons at his alma mater. The Hilltoppers went 29-7 this season, winning the Sun Belt Conference title and advancing to the West Regional semifinals, where they lost to top-seeded UCLA 88-78.

It was Western Kentucky's best season since

making it to the regional semifinals in 1993.

Horn has three years remaining on his contract, which includes a buyout of \$157,000 per year for each year bought out, as well as a provision that would require Horn's new school to play four games against the Hilltoppers in the future.

Horn was an assistant at Western Kentucky, Morehead State and Marquette before becoming the Hilltoppers head coach in 2003, replacing Dennis Felton, who left for Georgia.

South Carolina went 14-18 this season, including a 5-11 mark in the Southeastern Conference.

The Gamecocks struggled in the Southeastern Conference under Odom, going 128-104 overall and 41-71 in the SEC in his seven seasons at the school.

South Carolina has made the NCAA tournament only once this decade, in 2004, and only four times since 1974.

a great job for us."

Ledford, a former Stanford swimmer, opted to send out separate statements from the twins in order to keep the attention on both of them.

"When they go into the

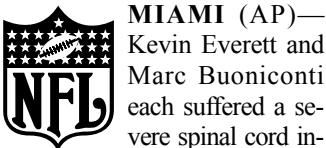
NBA, they're going to go to separate teams," she said. "Robin, his whole life he's been underappreciated and undervalued."

The Cardinal were eliminated by Texas in the South Re-

gional semifinals on Saturday in Houston.

Ledford said coach Trent Johnson was supportive of the twins' decision. A message left at Johnson's office was not immediately returned.

Everett visits paralysis researchers



MIAMI (AP)—Kevin Everett and Marc Buoniconti each suffered a severe spinal cord injury while making a tackle. The difference between them on Friday was the result of more than 20 years of research.

Buoniconti has used a wheelchair since being paralyzed while playing football for The Citadel in 1985.

Everett walked through the lobby of The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis just about seven months after he crumpled face-down on the turf following a tackle in which his helmet struck another player's helmet and shoulder pad.

The former Buffalo Bills tight end praised the experimental therapies being developed at the world's largest spinal cord injury research center.

"You can see it works," Everett said. "They practically saved my life. They got me to where I wanted to be again, moving and walking around."

He stood tall next to Buoniconti, Dr. Barth Green, the Miami Project's co-founder, and Dr. Dalton Dietrich, its scientific director. Green started the project in 1985 with three families

whose loved ones had suffered spinal cord injuries, including Buoniconti, son of pro football Hall of Fame linebacker Nick Buoniconti.

"To be able to see the work of the Miami Project pay off by being part of Kevin's recovery, it means the world to us," Buoniconti said. "To see how far the research has come, it goes to show you how close we are to actually finding a cure."

Everett has made incredible progress, though his rehabilitation continues.

"I'm still working on the dexterity in my hands, being able to do everyday stuff such as brush my hair, tie my shoes," he said. "It's getting better."

Doctors initially feared Everett would never walk after he collapsed on the Bills' home turf Sept. 9. He remained motionless for several minutes while medical personnel tried to figure out what was wrong.

Everett was paralyzed from the neck down when he arrived at a Buffalo hospital, and spent the first few days on life support. He would need four hours of surgery to realign his neck and stabilize it with screws, rods and a titanium plate.

But what helped save his mo-



Former Buffalo Bills tight end Kevin Everett, center, tours The Miami Project to Cure Paralysis that is credited with helping him recover from a life-threatening spinal cord injury Friday March 28, 2008 in Miami.

bility happened just minutes after he went down. Bills doctor Andrew Cappuccino placed Everett into moderate hypothermia as he was carted to an ambulance. Cappuccino learned the experimental method to limit

swelling and inflammation at a Miami Project seminar.

The therapy is analogous to an ice pack for the spine.

A few days later, Everett showed movement in his legs and arms and was sensitive to

Olympic torch headed to Kazakhstan



BEIJING (AP)—The Olympic flame headed to Kazakhstan on Tuesday to start a monthlong

global tour expected to be a magnet for protests against China, even as the communist leadership hoped to bask in international praise.

The flame left on a chartered plane after an elaborate kickoff ceremony held under tight security in host city Beijing. It will make 21 stops before returning to mainland China on May 4.

Activists in London, Paris and San Francisco have pledged to disrupt the relay to bring attention to causes ranging from Tibetan independence to the crisis in Sudan's Darfur region. But Kazakhstan and then Turkey on Thursday could also be flash points for members of China's Muslim Uighur minority living abroad.

The People's Daily, the official Communist Party newspaper, warned in an editorial Tuesday that troubles lie ahead in the four months before the Aug. 8-24 games.

"With the opening of the Games approaching, the burden on our shoulders is heavier and the task tougher," it said. "We must keep a clear head, improving our awareness of the potential dangers, and bravely facing all the difficulties and challenges."

But the commentary said China is prepared for the diffi-

culties because "to successfully host the Olympics is the wish shared by 1.3 billion Chinese people."

Monday's ceremony to rekindle the Olympic torch went off seamlessly in Beijing's closely guarded Tiananmen Square—with dancers in brightly colored uniforms, flower-toting children and confetti. The flame had been carried from Greece in a lantern aboard an Air China flight.

Indian athlete to boycott Olympic torch

NEW DELHI (AP)—India's soccer captain has refused to carry the Olympic torch through the New Delhi later this month to protest China's crackdown on recent demonstrations in Tibet, a sports official said Tuesday.

Bhaichung Bhutia, among the first athletes to refuse to run with the torch, informed the Indian Olympic Association on Monday, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to reporters.

"This is my way of standing by the people of Tibet and their struggle. I abhor violence in any form," The Times Of India quoted Bhutia as saying.

The IOA, which is organizing the flame's run in New Delhi on April 17, has invited several top Indian athletes, including Bhutia, to take part in

President Hu Jintao presided over the ceremony broadcast to the world on state television. About 5,000 people attended the invitation-only event, though hundreds of seats were left vacant, filled only with plainclothes security agents in black jackets.

The 85,000-mile torch relay is a record, meant to showcase China's growing economic and political clout. But the Olympic games have also focused atten-

tion on China in the wake of a deadly crackdown on protests in March in Tibet, the biggest challenge to Chinese rule in the Himalayan region since 1989.

The unrest has drawn intense international scrutiny of Beijing's human rights policies, causing embarrassment and frustration for China.

China has consistently blamed the Dalai Lama, Tibet's exiled spiritual leader, and his supporters for inciting protests that began March 10 in the Tibetan capital of Lhasa. The initially peaceful marches exploded into violence four days later.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi urged President Bush to consider boycotting the opening ceremony of the Beijing Olympics as a symbolic gesture against China's crackdown on protesters in Tibet.

"I think boycotting the opening ceremony, which really gives respect to the Chinese government, is something that should be kept on the table," Pelosi said in an interview taped for airing Tuesday on ABC television. "I think the president might want to rethink this later, depending on what other heads of state do."

However, Pelosi, a longtime critic of China's human rights policies, said she does not support boycotting the full games. The White House has said that Bush would not boycott the Olympics, saying they are a sporting event, not a political one.

But international athletes were starting to make their own political statements regarding China.

touch. He improved so steadily during the first two weeks that he was transferred to Houston for the next stage of his rehab.

Cappuccino continued consulting with Green on Everett's status until the player was transferred to Houston.

Coincidentally, Bills owner Ralph Wilson had been among Green's other surgical patients. In 1997, Green operated to relieve a narrowing around the spine that was pinching off the nerves to Wilson's feet.

Everett said he was establishing a foundation to contribute to the research at the Miami Project, starting with a fashion show fundraiser Saturday in Miami Beach. The program is based at

the Miller School of Medicine at the University of Miami, Everett's alma mater.

"We're hoping that Kevin and his foundation will spread the word: More research needs to be done, patients deserve better treatment," Green said.

The Miami Project also has received a \$113,000 grant from the NFL to continue its research into hypothermic therapy.

South Florida paramedics are currently being trained to administer the moderate hypothermia therapy Everett received to people who suffer heart attacks and traumatic brain and spinal injuries, said Green, chairman of Miller's neurological surgery department at the University of Miami school of medicine.

"Dr. Cappuccino showed us it was feasible," Green said.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Boston	58	15	.795	—
Toronto	38	36	.514	20 1/2
Philadelphia	37	37	.500	21 1/2
New Jersey	31	43	.419	27 1/2
New York	20	53	.274	38

Southeast Division

x-Orlando	47	27	.635	—
Washington	38	36	.514	9
Atlanta	34	40	.459	13
Charlotte	28	46	.378	19
Miami	13	61	.176	34

Central Division

y-Detroit	52	21	.712	—
x-Cleveland	41	33	.554	11 1/2
Indiana	31	43	.419	21 1/2
Chicago	29	44	.397	23
Milwaukee	24	48	.333	27 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

New Orleans	50	22	.694	—
San Antonio	51	23	.689	—
Houston	49	24	.671	1 1/2
Dallas	46	28	.622	5
Memphis	19	55	.257	32

Northwest Division

Utah	49	26	.653	—
Denver	45	29	.608	3 1/2
Portland	38	36	.514	10 1/2
Minnesota	19	53	.264	28 1/2
Seattle	17	57	.230	31 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	50	24	.676	—
Phoenix	50	24	.676	—
Golden State	45	28	.616	4 1/2
Sacramento	33	40	.452	16 1/2
L.A. Clippers	22	52	.297	28

x-clinched playoff spot

y-clinched division

Yesterday's Games

Indiana 105, Miami 85

Toronto 104, Charlotte 100

Atlanta 116, Memphis 99

Utah 129, Washington 87

Phoenix 132, Denver 117

Dallas 93, L.A. Clippers 86

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East

	W	L	Pct	GB
Tampa Bay	1	0	1.000	—
Boston	1	1	.500	1/2
Toronto	0	0	.000	1/2
New York	0	0	.000	1/2
Baltimore	0	1	.000	1

Central Division

Cleveland	1	0	1.000	—
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LOCAL SCORES

Little League Standings

Majors

Patriots	5	1
Dragons	5	1
Red Sox	5	1
Survivors	5	1
O/Aces	5	1
Hustlers I	3	1
Dolphins	4	2
Braves	3	2
Twins	3	3
Athletics	1	4
Hustlers II	1	4
McDonald's	1	5
Pirates	1	4
Dare JPO's	1	4
Lions	0	4
Suns	0	5

Jazy Cup speeds off April 13



Cyclists will again have a field day on April 13 when the Jazy Cup Tour de Marianas Cycling Road Race Series speeds off around Saipan.

By JON PEREZ

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REPORTER

The Saipan leg of the inaugural Jazy Cup Tour de Marianas Cycling Road Race Series races off on April 13, Sunday, at American Memorial Park.

The Saipan race—which is sponsored in part by TakeCare, Mair, Mai, Spade & Thompson, Jazy Sportswear, Toro Bravo MD Imaging, and Tan Holdings

Corp.—will also have a similar event in Guam on May 3 and 4.

Registration is now ongoing and registration forms are available at Auto Glass Pro-Romy's Bike Shop in Beach Road.

The April 13 road race begins and ends at AMP. Two divisions are offered in the race with the Expert class going for two laps of 48.6 kilometers, while the Novice category will have one lap of 24.3K.

Showtime for the race, which

also has a mountain bike course consists of one lap of 11.75K, is at 5:15am while go time is at 6:30am.

Triathlon bikes are also allowed and for safety purposes organizers are discouraging the use of tribars. Minimum 16-spoke wheeled bike can be used in the race, which would benefit the Jazy Garcia Sports Foundation.

The Guam edition will have two stages, namely, the Time

Trial from Adelup to Adelup on May 3 and the Road Race on May 4 from Agana Shopping Center and back.

Registration fees are \$20 each for the two road races and the time trial and \$30 for all three stages. Checks should be made payable to the Jazy Garcia Sports Foundation.

The deadline to register is on April 11 for the Saipan leg and May 2 for the Guam edition.

Sponsors lining up for 3-on-3 caging

By JON PEREZ

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REPORTER



Sponsors are slowly coming in to support the scheduled 3-on-3 Street Ball Jam-boree on April 19 at the Garapan Basketball Court.

Victory Chapel in Garapan organized the one-day street basketball tournament and the event will run from 3pm to 9pm at the Garapan court across

Bank of Guam.

Some of the businesses that threw in or committed supporting the tournament are Shell Marianas, Marianas Pacific Distributors Inc. (MARPA), Coca Cola Micronesia, Herman's Bakery, Pacific Trading Co. Ltd. (Pepsi), Micronesian Brokers Inc., Pacific Islands Club, Saipan World Resort, McDonald's Saipan, Mary's Bakery, Triple J Five Star Wholesale, Saipan Ice & Water, Joeten Corp., Yaong Corp., Fiesta Resort & Spa, Century Insurance,

Hyatt Regency Saipan, and Coral Ocean Point.

The tournament is open to men's division teams ages 16-and-over and a minimum of four or maximum of five players are allowed in each squad. The registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and number of teams will be limited to 16.

The tournament, one of Victory Chapel's community projects for the year, will follow a knockout system format where the top two teams after the

elimination round will vie for the \$300 top prize, while the runner-up settles for \$180.

Cash prizes and other exciting giveaways, donated by various sponsors, will be raffled throughout the contest. Organizers are inviting everyone to join them in the one-day tournament.

The entrance fee is \$30 per team.

For more information on how to get the entry forms and tournament rules, call Ed Sikayun or Martin Mettao at 235-8418.

DRAGONS

From Page 28

inside-the-park home run to score the winning run for the Pirates and

end the game. He went 3-for-6 with four runs and three RBIs.

John Flores went 4-for-5 with four runs and six RBIs. He had a bases-clearing triple in the first inning then connected on a two-

RBI double in the fourth.

Frank Camacho joined in the hit parade going 4-for-5 with five runs and one RBI, an RBI-double in the third inning.

The Pirates led 9-2 after one

inning but the Enforcers scored 12 runs in the top of the second to grab the lead. The Pirates closed in at 11-14 after two complete innings then pulled away with an 11-run third inning.

KOMORO

From Page 28

Chong Soo Oh and Jun Hyuk Jang combined for 6-for-10 in batting with three runs and three RBIs. Jang also had a lead off triple in the top of the eighth.

Jung Hoon Jae went 2-for-5 with a double and three RBIs, while Jin Kwan Han went 1-for-6 but had a bases-clearing triple in Komoro's six-run seventh inning scoring run.

Han, who scored on an error by Kabur third baseman Hector Efraim, tripled in the seventh inning to allow Komoro to pull away.

Oh singled but was tagged out going to second on a 6-4 putout play, while Lee singled and stole

second base to give himself better position to score a run.

Lee reached third base on a Jang single and both runners reach home on a throwing error by Leo Bobai. Kim was also safe at first in that play.

Kabur manager Dennis Renguuk had enough and made a pitching change bringing in Damian Kuich when Jin Wook Jo was about to bat. Kabur is sponsored by Bridge Capital.

Kuich walked Jo to put runners at first and second base but bounced back afterwards when he struck out Jae for the second out. He then walked Jin Taek Lim to load the bases then gave up a triple to Han.

Kim replaced Lim, with one out and Kabur scoring three

runs, in the bottom of the second when Efraim was about to bat. He struck out the Kabur third baseman then walked Renguul before retiring Payton Sakuma.

Kim earned the win after allowing Kabur to two earned runs on one hit with 12 strikeouts and seven walks. He just forced Kabur to hit grounders, infield and fly balls, and line drives.

Bobai was the lone Kabur batter that managed to challenge the Komoro pitchers going 3-for-4 with two runs, a triple, and an RBI.

Defending champion Tanapag Falcons will try to keep pace with league-leading Rock Steady when they battle the San Roque D9ers, which suffered a 3-16 beating from Rock Steady last Friday, in today's 6:30pm game.

CWGA Members tourney on April 12 and 13



The CNMI Women Golf Association will hold its Members Annual

Two-Day Golf Tournament on April 12 and 13 at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort west course.

According to club secretary Lorraine Babauta, the two-day competition will award prizes to the Top 5 gross scores and the Top 5 in the point system, which is a compilation of 12 monthly games and points applied to each based on scores.

Established in March 2007, CWGA is a nonprofit organization founded to promote, encourage, and introduce women to the sport of golf in the CNMI.

The organization intends to accomplish the following: 1. Promote civic and community interest in golf; 2. Establish and encourage competition and good sportsmanship; 3. Promote and provide social func-

tions of the members and their families; 4. Promote youth golf activities; and 5. To do any or all things necessary and proper to accomplish its purpose and intention.

CWGA also commits its members to abide by a set of values that will further enrich a golfer's performance, attitude, and conduct-adopted from the USA Junior Golf Association.

The set of values members of CWGA are committed to faithfully are as follows: perseverance; sportsmanship; respect; honesty; judgment; responsibility; reliance; courtesy; and sincerity.

The association was established in March 2007 with Noriko Togawa serving as president, Lou Kim as vice president, Aya Matsumoto as treasurer, Babauta as secretary, and Tudela, Bobbie Guerrero, and Dolores Yamagishi acting as directors. (Mark Rabago)

Two PBA imports on way out

MANILA, Philippines—Two Philippine Basketball Association imports are headed home after failing to keep up with the expectations of their respective teams.

Jason Keep's mediocre opening stint with the Welcoat Dragons and an injured Calvin Cage of Coca-Cola have prompted team officials to consider hiring replacements capable of doing the task.

A Welcoat official confirmed the Dragons are now scouting a substitute for the 6-foot-10 Keep, who debuted with 12 points and 15 rebounds built on a lackluster 5-of-13 shooting during the team's 105-95 setback to the Air21 Express on Sunday.

"When he (Keep) came here on his first practice with the team, we already knew the need to change an import," said the Welcoat team official who requested anonymity. "There's just not enough time to make the replacement."

The same source said the Dragons are hoping to seal a deal with a new import to complement 6-foot-1 Corey Santee in time for Welcoat's game against Talk 'N

Text on Friday. Santee scored 19 points and had nine assists and two steals for the Dragons.

On Coca-Cola's side, team manager J.B. Baylon is contemplating securing the services of another import following a freak accident that put the 6-foot Cage on the injury list.

Cage fractured his right ankle as a result of a flagrant foul inflicted by Talk 'N Text rookie

Yousif Aljamal during the Tigers' 87-79 win over the Phone Pals in Panabo City over the weekend. Cage and co-import 6-foot-9 Jason Dixon showed up with 19 points for the Tigers.

"We'll be able to determine the extent of the damage on the succeeding tests," said Baylon. "But initial findings show a fracture on his ankle that would take a month to heal."

While Cage and Keep are in danger of losing their jobs, Talk 'N Text import Aaron McGhee, Steve Thomas of Air21 and Red Bull's Adam Parada have impressed their ballclubs in the conference-openers of the 2008 Smart-PBA Fiesta Cup.



ORGANIZERS

From Page 28

pate. Pohnpei and Guam are the only teams that will be competing in the men's and women's divisions, while Kosrae will only send a men's team.

Tobin said they would again send invitations to all member federations once he meets with Guam Basketball Confederation director of basketball operations Bob Pelkey.

"We would contact you all again in November 2008 and see if there is interest in holding the MBT in Pohnpei in July 2009," Tobin said.

Chuuk, Yap, CNMI, Nauru, and Kiribati have already in-

formed Tobin about their inability to send teams to the competition.

Tobin said in a previous email that it would be hard to organize a good tournament with only three men's and two women's teams.

He added that Palau and the CNMI asked to postpone the MBT until next year.

Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands secretary general Michael A. White informed Tobin that CNMI could not compete this year due to funding problems.

White said the CNMI could join the tournament if it is moved to next year and would not coincide with the Oceania Tournament, which will also be

held next year.

Only Guam and host Pohnpei beat the March 14 preliminary registration and were able to submit the requirements of their men's and women's teams.

Palau requested the tournament be moved to next year to give them more time to prepare.

The trip will be costly for Kiribati as their teams need to fly to Fiji, through Australia, and to Guam to reach Pohnpei. Kiribati also needs to have U.S. transit visas to get through Guam.

The long trip to Pohnpei would cost \$2,800 in airfare for members. Nauru, which is near Kiribati, would also spend the same amount and that would make it hard for the two countries to join in this year's tournament.



Jazy Cup speeds off April 13

The Saipan leg of the inaugural Jazy Cup Tour de Marianas Cycling Road Race Series races off on April 13, Sunday, at American Memorial Park.

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Saipan Tribune Sports

The \$138M Tigers opens with thud, lose to Royals

The frugal Kansas City Royals held on to beat the \$138 million (\$87 million) Detroit Tigers 5-4 in 11 innings and give Trey Hillman a win in his major league debut as manager.

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28 WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2008

Dragons burn Twins, join leaders

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

The Pacific Islands Club-Deloitte&Touche San Antonio Dragons joined four other teams on top of the standings in the Major division of the Saipan Little League after beating its opponents on Sunday.

The San Antonio Dragons went on a nine-run first

inning scoring rampage to smolder the Wells Fargo As Matuis Twins, 14-2, at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.



Jose Ngeskebei led that Dragons attack

going 2-for-3 with two runs scored and a two-RBI triple in San Antonio's nine-run first inning rally.

Alden Ngeskebei also went 2-for-3 with three runs, a double, and one stolen base while starting pitcher Juljen Ngeskebei went 1-for-3 scoring one run, a stolen base, and a first inning two-RBI triple.

Juljen Ngeskebei earned the win when she pitched two no-hit and scoreless innings with four strikeouts and no walks.

Geral Cabrera replaced Juljen pitching two innings in relief giving up one earned run on two hits with four strikeouts and one walk.

Pirates 30, Enforcers 20

The Kautz Glass Pirates needed almost four hours before pulling off a 30-20 decision against DPS Dare JPO supported by Rep. Diego T. Benavente.

The first three innings alone took two hours in a game that showcased the offensive prowess of both teams. They also had a lot of stranded runners on base.

With the score pegged at 29-20 at the bottom of the fifth, Patrick Reyes led off with a solo

See DRAGONS on Page 27

Komoro snaps skid, Kabur continues losing

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER



HoKyoony Lee blasted an inside-the-

park home run while strikeout record-holder Kim Jae Young pitched 7 1/3 innings to lead Komoro to its first win in the 3rd Annual Budweiser-Saipan Major League.

Komoro ended its four-game slide giving manager Jay Han and the Korean Baseball Association-supported squad their first win with a 12-7 clipping of Kabur on Monday night at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

Lee, who walked twice, was a triple short of making the cycle going 3-for-4 including a solo shot in the top of the fifth against Kabur starter Tuwi Ngridung. He also had a double, scored three runs, had two stolen bases, and two RBIs.

Lee also led the Komoro hit parade as they combined for 13-for-40 in batting or a .325 average compared to Kabur's 5-for-31 or a measly .161.

See KOMORO on Page 27

San Antonio Dragons pitcher Juljen Ngeskebei throws a pitch to an As Matuis Twins batter in their Majors division game in the Saipan Little League on Sunday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.

JON PEREZ

No Fear, YoYo's win indoor volley titles

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER



No Fear and YoYo's took on separate routes to win the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League

titles in Monday night's finals held at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The championship matches were the resumption of their games that were played last Thursday, March 27, but were canceled due to a scheduled power outage.

No Fear, which enjoyed a twice-to-beat advantage after going undefeated in the double-elimination playoff round, was pushed to the limit by Fanians losing the first game before finally disposing their opponents in the rubber in another three grueling sets.

Fanians overcame an opening set loss to score a 21-25, 25-17, 15-7 win over No Fear in Game 1 but could not complete their upset bid in Game 2.

In the second game, No Fear could not easily dispose off Fanians as they needed another three sets to finally wrap up the

contest, 25-20, 23-25, 15-9.

No Fear's members are Hank Magofna, John Rebueng, Carl Torres, Rory Kaipat, Tito Francisco, Joemil Lisua, Pete Iguel, Jordan Marciano, Freddy Pelisamen, Rodney Rosario, and Nick Castro.

No Fear earned the first finals slot in the men's side after a three-set 25-23, 24-26, 15-6 win

over Ol'Aces.

Fanians earned the right of facing No Fear after a 25-14, 25-21 win over Ol'Aces.

No Fear finished second behind pennant winner Menudo in the standings as they ended the regular season with an 11-5 mark.

Top seed Menudo faded in the playoffs as they could not find



JON PEREZ

No Fear's Hank Magofna, right, tries to block a spike by Sivas Awes of Home Boyz in this file photo taken during the opening of the 2008 Indoor Winter Volleyball League on Jan. 15 at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

the same spunk that allowed them to finish with a league-best 12-4 mark.

Fanians was third in the standings with a 10-6 slate similar to Ol'Aces. Some of Fanians wins were against teams that finished in the Top 4, including a stunning upset of Menudo in the early goings of the league.

In the women's division, YoYo's squeezed out a 25-15, 23-25, 15-12 victory against pennant winners Pikan Gaga.

YoYo's foiled Pikan Gaga's bid to go undefeated this season when they scored a 25-23, 23-20 win on Feb. 28 to end their opponents' eight-game winning run. YoYo's had the second-best record in the league with an 8-4 slate.

Gin Gridley, Mili Saiki, Akiko Endo, Kimberly Hutchison, Julie Bethke, Mika Okubo, Kelly Butcher, Linda Anastacio, Beverly Cabanatan, Amanda Puleo, and Mai are the members of YoYo's.

YoYo's earned the first finals berth after a 25-16, 22-25, 15-10 win over Pikan Gaga, who met Beach Jammers in the semifinals. Pikan Gaga downed Beach Jammers, 25-11, 25-17, to earn the right of facing YoYo's in the finals.

Organizers cancel Pohnpei MBT

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER



It's now final and official as organizers of the 2008 Micronesian Basketball Tournament decided to cancel the scheduled event in Kolonia, Pohnpei this year.

In an email sent to representatives of the nine member basketball federations in Micronesia, co-chair Jim Tobin said they have agreed to cancel the games since only three island nations committed to field their respective teams.

"The Pohnpei Basketball Association and the 2008 MBT local organizing committee have agreed to cancel the 2008 MBT," said Tobin, who along with Castro Joab, is chairman of the local organizing committee.

Tobin said only Kosrae, Pohnpei, and Guam agreed to partici-

See ORGANIZERS on Page 27



SAIPANTRIBUNE

CNMI Men's National Basketball Team forward James Lee pump-fakes against a Palau players in this file photo from the 2006 Micronesian Games basketball competition. The 2008 Micronesian Basketball Tournament has been formally cancelled after few teams confirmed their participation.